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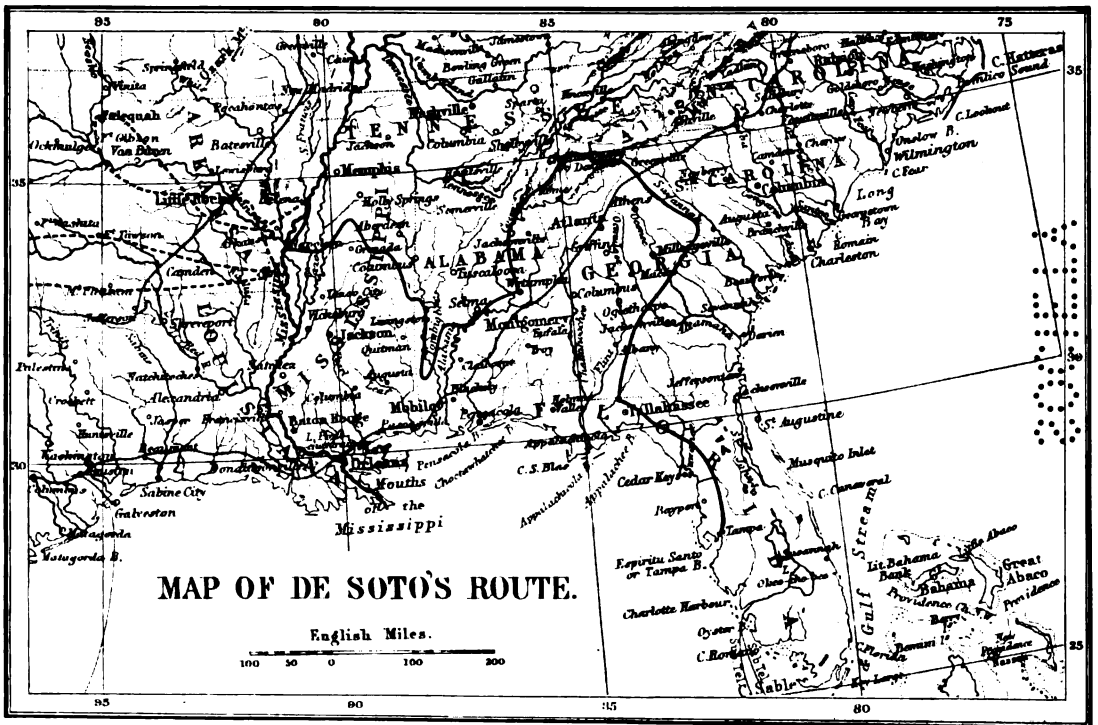
ADVENTURES

OF

ROGER L'ESTRANGE



MAP OF DE SOTO'S ROUTE.

ADVENTURES

OF

ROGER L'ESTRANGE

SOMETIME CAPTAIN IN THE FLORIDA ARMY OF

HIS EXCELLENCY THE MARQUIS HERNANDO DE SOTO

GOVERNOR OF CUBA, AND CAPTAIN-GENERAL OF ALL FLORIDA

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH, AND PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION

BY

DOMINICK DALY

BARRISTER, INNER TEMPLE

WITH A PREFACE BY HENRY M. STANLEY, M.P.

AND A ROUTE-MAP

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PREFACE

MY friend Mr. Dominick Daly, who has undertaken to edit the *Adventures of Roger L'Estrange*, desires a few words from me as a preface to the book. The intrinsic merits of the work are quite sufficient in themselves to recommend it to that large class of readers which delights in perusing annals of exploration, discovery, and adventure. The impressions and the varied incidents recorded by Roger are written in a language so like that of to-day, that we have to remind ourselves of the dates to make sure that the events related do not belong to the present generation. Liverpool was, however, only a fishing village, Manchester but an insignificant hamlet, and the Mersey but an obscure stream, at the time the story begins. The sentiments, also, which here and there find utterance might belong to one duly impressed with the moralities of Exeter Hall; though, when in the thick of the strife, the deeds of the hero are such as we might expect from a valiant of the period. What I most admire in Roger is that he is so fresh, naïve, and candid, and can tell a straight story. Even Daniel Defoe, of whose style he reminds me, could not have told it better.

As a follower of Ferdinand de Soto, the discoverer of the "Father of Waters," he is something new. Incidentally he tells us a great deal of a man of whom too little was known. Columbus, Cortes, Pizarro, Da Gama, and many another great leader and discoverer, have been remembered by historians and poets; but the discoverer of the Mississippi has had but scant justice done to his memory, though, next to the discovery of Columbus, the finding of the great American river ranked as the greatest feat of the sixteenth century. As some amends for the neglect of such a man this book may be accepted. Our knowledge thus gained of him is—I am glad to say—not at all disparaging, but is as honourable to the follower as to the leader of the great enterprise. For the above reasons I heartily welcome the appearance of the *Adventures of Roger L'Estrange;* and I think that the literary charm and freshness which I have found in it amply justify the few remarks which I have ventured to make.

HENRY M. STANLEY.

CADOXTON LODGE, NEATH,
October 6th, 1896.

INTRODUCTORY

IN the year 1891, whilst in Mexico on private business, I was requested by my friend Colonel Hoffman, of New York, to see if there might be found in the literary collections of the Aztec capital any documents on record calculated to be of use to him in the preparation of his forthcoming work upon Quetzacoatl, the Mexican Messiah —that strange legendary white man of the long beard, who, coming from across the eastern sea, seems to have imparted to the ancient Mexicans, the Toltecs, some knowledge of the doctrine and practices of Christianity, hundreds of years before the Spanish Conquest. As I had time at my disposal, and the task accorded with my own tastes and present plan of work, I very willingly agreed to comply with the request as far as possible. In the event I could find little or nothing fresh, or of use to the Colonel. In the Museum there is a fairly good collection of Aztec picture-writings and works of art, and early Spanish-Mexican compositions. But the largest and best collections of the kind, native or foreign, are not to be found in Mexico at all, but rather at the Vatican at Rome, in the Royal Library at Madrid, or in the Paris Bibliothèque Nationale. For not in vain did Zummaraga, the first Archbishop of Mexico, ruthlessly burn whole mountains of Aztec writings and pictures, and destroy or deface numberless inscriptions and works of art. So well did he do his work that but a small fraction of Aztec literature and art escaped his religious fury, and that mostly what happened to have been previously sent out of the country. Alas for the fate of a native literature left to the mercy of an ignorant foreign bigot such as he! But what was to be expected from an ecclesiastical potentate so debased in mind and deficient in understanding as to lend the weight of his authority to the

gross and outrageous fraud associated with the miraculous picture of the "Virgin of Guadalupe"—a wretched daub in oil paints, directly handed down from Heaven by the Mother of God herself to a vagabond Indian? Surely the folly of fools in authority is the most pernicious kind of wickedness!

However, in the course of my explorations amongst the dusty shelves, cupboards, and chests in the store rooms of the Library, I came upon many old Spanish documents—such as proclamations, charters, grants of land and privileges—dating back to the time of the Viceroys. These, for the most part, were neither curious nor important, relating as they mainly did to the private and personal interests of the early Spanish settlers—the extent of their possessions, their rights over the native populations, their obligations to the Crown, and so forth.

I persevered in my task with little reward for the time I was spending and the trouble I was taking, and had almost made up my mind to have done with the irksome undertaking, when one day I happened to pick out from amongst the contents of an old cedar-wood chest a strongly, though roughly, bound book of quarto size, secured by a broad strap of leather. This I took to be an old account book, several of which I had already come across and replaced after a cursory inspection. But as this particular book was not, externally, quite like the others, and seemed to have had more care taken with it, I went to the trouble of undoing the strap to see what its contents might be. Instead of the crabbed contractions and figures of a Spanish book of accounts which I half expected to find, I saw to my surprise that the writing at the place where I had opened the book was pure English, of the script known as Elizabethan. I read the first few pages of the book with avidity, and quickly formed the opinion that I had happened upon a literary "find" which might be worth taking some trouble about. As I turned over the leaves I found that the book was not all in English, but partly (and indeed for the most part) in Spanish, of the sixteenth century. Some of the earlier pages were all in English; but the rest were in Spanish, interrupted here and there by more pages in English. The book was in excellent preservation, written throughout by the same hand, and supplying

one continuous narrative, of which not a line was missing nor a word wanting.

Having mastered the contents of the book, I considered that it would repay transcription and translation, with a view to publication. I was not permitted (and very properly so) to remove the volume from the Library; but, by the courtesy of the Minister of Education, both myself and a secretary were afforded every facility for dealing with the book on the premises in the Plaza Mayor; and I am glad to have this opportunity of publicly and gratefully acknowledging the Minister's kindness.

I do not well understand why Roger L'Estrange wrote partly in English and partly in Spanish. It may be that, living amongst Spaniards for many years, Spanish had become easier to him than his native language, and that it was with a view to keeping himself up in the latter that he commenced writing the book in English, lapsing into the easier language from time to time, and again resolutely reverting to his mother tongue. This, at least, is the only explanation I can suggest.

The full title of the work, as now printed, is exactly the same as in the original manuscript, only that I have added the self-suggestive words, "An Autobiography," &c. It appears to me that L'Estrange must have had the idea of composing a work which should, at one and the same time, be accurately historical, and interesting to his posterity as a personal narrative. The original work is not divided into chapters; these, with their headings, being my work, and intended to convenience the reader. It is right I should say that I have not fully supplied the text, Spanish or English, of L'Estrange's manuscript, but omitted, for the sake of brevity, many passages which appeared to me of small importance or interest, and not essential to the personal adventures of L'Estrange. He seems to have been a conscientious and scrupulous recorder of all he observed, great or small; but I thought it best to omit, or pass over lightly, much that seemed of secondary consequence, or which had exclusive relation to military matters. I did this the more readily when I came to know that two

contemporary and very full histories of the operations of the army, from first to last, were extant. For I must frankly confess that at first I knew very little about the Expedition of De Soto. But on reading up the subject, I found that, on the whole, L'Estrange's narrative agreed with the above-mentioned contemporary histories. One of them is in Spanish; the other was written by a Portuguese nobleman, who served in the army from its formation, in 1538, to the arrival in Mexico of all that remained of it in 1543. An abridged translation of the former by T. Irving was published in New York in 1835; a full translation of the Portuguese narrative was supplied to the English reading public by the press of the Hakluyt Society in 1847. The latter is also epitomised in Purchase's "Pilgrims." The Spanish account mentions, without giving names, that two young Englishmen were with the Expedition; and no doubt these were L'Estrange and his cousin Henry Stanley.

Of the Stanleys of Hooton, in Cheshire, I was even more ignorant originally than of the Expedition of De Soto. On making certain inquiries, however, I found that L'Estrange was here again quite reliable. The Stanleys of this part, with whom he claimed close relationship through his mother, were an ancient and highly distinguished family, of some historical notoriety, at the time about which L'Estrange wrote, and also before and afterwards. It is quite correct that they were ardent Catholics, and strong opponents of the Protestant Reformation in England and elsewhere. They were high in royal favour during the short reign of Queen Mary, which was natural; but they stood equally high in the esteem of Elizabeth (at least at first), which was somewhat remarkable. In both reigns, Sir William Stanley and his son Edward held important offices in Ireland, and also in the Netherlands later on, when Elizabeth was helping the Dutch to shake off the yoke of Spain. The war was one of religion in all its main aspects, and the conscientious strain became at last too great for the loyalty of the Stanleys. They very deliberately betrayed the fortified town of Deventer to the Spaniards, and took service under the Spanish Crown, and Hooton and England knew them no more.* An earlier

* Motley, in his *History of the Netherlands*, gives a full account of this historical event.

member of this family, also named Sir William, was present at the Battle of Bosworth Field, as mentioned by Sir Thomas Moore in his history of Richard III. He is not to be confounded with Lord Stanley, who also took part in the same battle.

I should be glad to have obtained some knowledge of the ultimate fate of Roger L'Estrange, or of the history of his descendants; and I see no reason for thinking that such knowledge is not to be had. Unfortunately I could not, during my short stay in Mexico, devote any time whatever to making the necessary inquiries in the most likely place for information; namely, the district of Cuernavaca, where L'Estrange's estate was situated. It seems to me that a family so prosperous and numerous can scarcely have disappeared altogether, and that probably inquiries on the spot would supply traces of its continued existence. It is not likely that I shall ever have an opportunity of making such inquiries myself. While still in Mexico I heard tell of an officer of the army of the name of L'Estrange, but was unable to pursue any inquiries in relation to him.

It may be advisable to remind the reader that in the days of De Soto, the name Florida was the vague appellation of the then little known continent now called North America. The Spaniard who first discovered the peninsula at the south-east corner of that continent called the country Florida, without having an idea of the vast extent of the territories stretching away to the north and west for thousands of miles. Thus for a long time "Florida" was a kind of geographical expression of wide but uncertain application. In the course of time and political changes the name came to be more and more restricted in application, until now it applies only to that comparatively small area which is included in the United States under the name of the "State of Florida."

The narrative of Roger L'Estrange, and those of his contemporary historians and companions in arms, bring

out very strongly and strikingly the fact that the greater part of "Florida," as explored by De Soto, was occupied by numerous, populous, and civilized native communities. This fact is not sufficiently recognised, nor indeed generally known. It is a popular assumption, on both sides of the Atlantic, that all the natives of North America were nomadic savages, wandering from place to place in search of game, and having no permanent dwelling-places, and no towns and villages. As a general proposition this is not, and never has been, true. In all the regions east of the Mississippi penetrated by De Soto, and over a large area to the west of the river included in his survey, he found the natives settled and civilized, living in large and well-built houses, and occupying villages and towns, some of considerable size. They cultivated the ground and raised great crops of maize and other produce. Often as far as the eye could reach the country was seen to be covered with growing corn, and dotted in all directions with houses and hamlets. More than once De Soto's army was saved from the worst extremes of starvation, by coming upon vast stores of food laid up by the natives for winter use. In the matter of clothing the Indians were well supplied. They made a kind of cloth from cotton and other vegetable fibres, and were able to manufacture for themselves comfortable and even elegant mantles and dresses from the skins of beasts and feathers of birds. Of their laws and institutions very little is known; but so far as they came under the notice of the Spaniards, they seem to have been of a character suitable to the requirements of simple people having few wants, no commerce, no money, and no political ambitions to gratify. Their social organisation was tribal or territorial, but when occasion required they were able to assemble, and maintain in the field, combined forces numbering thousands of valiant warriors, as De Soto found to his cost, and ultimately to his ruin. Their fortified towns, too, the Spaniards found formidable enough, and by no means easy to take, with all their civilized appliances and European arts and methods. It is true that those people had no knowledge of the use of metals; no machinery, even in the simplest form; little or no acquaintance with the mechanical arts, and no domestic animals. They were still in their "Stone Age," like the

Mexicans and Peruvians; but not necessarily uncivilized, much less savage. There is the strongest possible contrast between them and the true savages of the far west. It was not until De Soto had penetrated far in that direction that he came upon the real "wild Indian" of popular conception. And it is remarkable that the settled natives of the east and south looked upon the wild men of the west with pity and contempt, and spoke of them as alien people with whom they had no connection and nothing in common. To confuse the two is as great an error as it would be on the part of an ignorant historian to represent the savage, uncouth Huns of the fourth century as types and specimens of the Europeans of that time.

It would be of little use to speculate upon the possible advances which the settled Indians of "Florida" might have made in civilization if their national development had not been interrupted by European intrusion; but probably they would have at least attained to that respectable degree of civilization reached by the Indians of Mexico and Peru, who were likewise unacquainted with the practical use of metals. It is enough in this place to recognise as facts that they were a fairly civilized people and no savages; that they were so from the remotest times of which we have any knowledge; and that those of them who have been fortunate enough to survive European wrong and violence have remained civilized, and in a vastly improved sense. The half-dozen Indian nations of the east and south (including the Cherokees) who enjoy the benevolent, if tardy, and perhaps precarious, protection of the government of the United States, are not mere civilized savages, but aboriginal peoples whose ancient native civilization has been grafted upon by the higher culture of the white man. And by all accounts the grafting has taken well. Those Indian communities are found to be satisfactory constituents in the great social and political agglomeration known as the United States. The members of them make good average progress in mental development, scholastic education, and material wealth. They are decent and well-behaved citizens, taking a remarkably keen interest in local and general politics. In trade, agriculture, and commerce they are industrious and enterprising, and are fairly well represented in most occupations, callings, and professions; wherein some

of them (as my friend Mr. Walkingstick, the Cherokee barrister-at-law, of Muskogee, I.T.,) have made their mark.

The task of indicating on a modern map the whole devious route taken by De Soto's army, from first to last, is impracticable. A portion of the route only can be traced, and that with some difficulty; but the rest is impossible. The Indian names of places and objects, as given in the accounts of the expedition, cannot always, nor even often, be identified with modern names; and even the accounts themselves do not always agree in the names of identical places, peoples, and geographical features, and they moreover bristle with discrepancies in regard to relative situations, cardinal directions, distances, times, etc. The difficulties in the way of tracing the route of the army, from its landing in Florida until it reached the Mississippi, near the junction with the Arkansas river, are not very great; afterwards the task becomes almost hopeless. Some reasonable speculation is, indeed, possible as to De Soto's line of march towards the west and back again to the Mississippi, where he died; but as to the second advance westward of the Spaniards under his successor Moscoso, and the return journey once more to the banks of the Mississippi, speculation as to the regions traversed becomes mere guesswork, and all that can be said with tolerable certainty is that Moscoso penetrated westward some hundred and fifty leagues from the great river before he turned back.

It is easy to understand why there should be this graduating difficulty in the effort to trace the entire route of the army. Up to the arrival of De Soto at the Mississippi, things were not so bad as to interfere greatly with careful and deliberate progress and observation. After that, the army was almost continuously in sore or desperate straits, and there was little opportunity or inclination for recording carefully the movements of the force. No doubt as long as De Soto lived the march would be, and appears in fact to have been, conducted with some observance of method and discipline, and with some degree of purpose and foresight; and consequently there is not an absolute lack of information as to its movements. But after De

Soto's death discipline relaxed, the force became disorganised, privations and sufferings increased, and the incapable Moscoso was merely the chief of a mob of desperate, ragged, and hungry vagabonds, wandering purposelessly in the western wilderness. Under such circumstances it is not surprising that nothing like a regular itinerary was kept of their movements.

The accompanying map shows, according to the best authorities, the line of march of De Soto's army from the Bay of Espiritu Santo (now called Tampa Bay), in the peninsula of Florida, to the Mississippi near its junction with the Arkansas river. That is the comparatively certain portion of his route, and is indicated by a thick, continuous red line on the map. The continuous dotted line is intended to indicate the probable march and countermarch of De Soto westward from the Mississippi. The dotted lines more to the south in the same region are to be taken as mere vague suggestions of the course pursued by Moscoso, from the Mississippi westward and back again, after the death of De Soto.

It is to be noted, in respect to those westward expeditions, that the Spaniards always started from, and returned to, the section of the Mississippi near the junction of that river with the Arkansas. It was here that De Soto struck and crossed the great river, and it was here also that the Spaniards finally embarked in the seven frail vessels they had constructed, and sailed away down the river for Mexico, abandoning completely the great enterprise in which so many lives, and so much treasure, had been expended. It was in this region that the Indian town of De Guzman and L'Estrange was situated, from which the Spaniards obtained such valuable assistance in their preparations for descending the Mississippi *en route* to Mexico. It lay, apparently, to the north of the scene of these preparations, and probably to the west of the Mississippi, at no great distance from that river, with which it was connected by a water-way, partly natural, and partly artificial. So much may be inferred from casual geographical references in the narrative of L'Estrange. Everything seems to point to the site of this town being the same as that of the ruins of the old Indian town known as Capaha, some eight miles south of the present American town of Helena, and above

and to the west of the junction of the Mississippi and Arkansas. Capaha, too, was connected with the Mississippi by a channel which, in part at least, seems to have been artificial. The ruins indicate the existence at the spot of an old Indian town, of no great size, but of some importance. They are described as consisting of artificial mounds, embankments, *débris* of brickwork, and other structural remains, interspersed with broken pottery, and fragments of various utensils. These suffice to establish the fact that the place must long have been occupied by a native race well advanced in the arts of civilization. The ruins of Capaha would apparently be somewhat nearer the Mississippi than the town L'Estrange writes about; but the frequent and considerable changes to which the course of the river is subject, might account for a discrepancy which seems to be the only one which seriously militates against the theory that L'Estrange's town and Capaha were one and the same. Any difference in the names is not material, for Indian towns commonly changed their names with their successive chiefs or rulers; and allowance has also to be made for variations brought about by lapse of time, and the white man's rendering of Indian names. And, after all, there is no great dissimilarity between "Capaha" and "Cargutah."

ADVENTURES

OF

ROGER L'ESTRANGE

CHAPTER I.

My parentage, relatives, and early life—My Sheffield uncle—Death of my father and mother—I abide with the Stanleys of Hooton—My education and training—To the Wars in Ireland—Heresy in England—Persecutions and Forfeitures—Return from Ireland—Death of my grandfather—Departure from Hooton with Henry Stanley—Voyage to Bilbao.

MY father, Roger Strange, or L'Estrange as sometimes called, was a yeoman of Yorkshire, holding in fee, by ancient descent, a small but sufficient estate in land, not far from the town of Sheffield. My mother was daughter of Sir Geoffrey Stanley, of the ancient and noble family of Stanleys of Hooton Manor in Cheshire, which is not many miles distant, in a south-westerly direction, from a town called Manchester, where they make fustians and other cloth.

My earlier years were partly passed in my father's house, and partly in that of a bachelor brother of his, Uncle Richard, who was a founder and worker of metals, at Sheffield, where he made knives, scissors, and cutting implements of all kinds, as well as many other useful things. Now Uncle Richard was much attached to me from my earliest youth, and desired greatly that I should come into his trade at Sheffield, and keep it as my own business after he had passed away. Therein I was nothing

loth, nor was my father unwilling; but my good mother and the Stanleys were cold to a proposal which they said would turn me from a gentleman into a mere mechanic. So, though much was spoken about it, nothing ever came of Uncle Richard's plan; though all the same I spent a good deal of time with him, and by his help gained some knowledge of the many curious arts of his business, and also of those appertaining to other trades carried on by artificers engaged in making metal implements and utensils, pottery, bricks, grindstones, charcoal, lime, and other things. For Sheffield is a town where there are five rapidly flowing streams, which are made use of to turn a multitude of wheels for all kinds of purposes. Besides which, great quantities of metallic ores, stones, and clays of various sorts, and wood, are found very near the town, or not far off. What I learned while with my Uncle Richard in Sheffield was afterwards very useful to me, as shall appear further on in this history.

I was nigh seventeen years of age when my father died somewhat suddenly, and then my brother Hugh succeeded as heir to the paternal estate, he being at the time married and the father of a family. Thereupon my grandfather, Sir Geoffrey, sent to my mother to say that she should come back to Hooton to live again with him, and should bring me with her, and he would take charge of my education and future advancement. My mother very willingly did as her father desired; but she did not live long after our arrival at Hooton, for from the death of my father she pined continually away, and never came round.

I was now fully adopted as one of the family at Hooton, and always well treated. My education (which had not, theretofore, been neglected) was completed in the company of my two cousins, William and Henry, sons of my uncle, Sir William Stanley, who himself was only son of Sir Geoffrey, and lived always at Hooton. There was little difference in the ages of we three cousins; but I was the oldest, and Henry the youngest. We had excellent teachers to instruct us in all branches of an education fit for gentlemen. In Latin and mathematics, we had for tutor Father Whateley, an old priest who had long been at the Manor as chaplain and confessor. In Spanish, French and Italian,

our instructor was Father Nicholas Gomez, a Spanish monk, of good family, who, in his earlier and secular days, had served under Cortes in Mexico; but with such ill-fortune, as to be one of the few who came back unenriched from the conquest of that empire, and one of the many who returned broken in spirits and constitution. He was wont to tell us how his health never recovered from the sufferings he had endured in the terrible "Night of Sorrow" ("Noche triste"), when the Mexicans sallied forth from their city, and overwhelmed the Spaniards on a great causeway running through a lake. He, wounded and exhausted, had to lie concealed in the water, amongst the reeds, for sixteen hours, before he could safely get away. He told us also of many incidents which gave us the impression that he had lost at play whatever booty he had obtained in Mexico, for, according to his representations, the Spaniards were inveterate gamblers and card players. After his sufferings and losses, and also because of his great disgust with the cruel way in which the Indians were treated, he abandoned the army, and became a Dominican. Then he joined with one Las Casas in trying to secure the Indians against the cruelties of the Spaniards, but doing little good in that matter, he had returned to Spain with Las Casas. How he came to be established at Hooton I know not; but I think he had some connection and correspondence with the Spanish Court. For the rest, my grandfather's hospitable house was a resort for priests and monks from far and near.

As the Stanleys of Hooton had always been soldiers, we three boys of the family were carefully instructed in all branches of the military art. In this, our chief teacher was Captain Roland Wyke, a valiant veteran, who had served under the Spinolas, on the Spanish side, in the Italian wars of the Emperor Charles V. We had instructions also in military mathematics and fortification, and in marine manœuvres; our nearness to the river Mersey and the sea affording the best opportunities and great facilities for the latter. Under such instruction, and in the hands of such teachers, our education throve apace; and for myself, I may say that, by the time I had reached my twentieth year, I was as well grown and sturdy a youth, and as fairly good a soldier for land or sea service, as any one of my age might

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be who had never had the experience of actual warfare. At broadsword and buckler I was quite equal to another, and with long and cross bow I excelled most with whom I competed. I could use the halberd and spear, and go through all the exercises of a *fantassin* or foot soldier. As a bare, or unarmoured cavalier, I was competent enough on horseback; but it never fell to my lot to carry plate armour, or wield the long lance of the knight, both of which, indeed, were then going out of fashion. In the use of matchlock and musquetoon I never became proficient; and that of my own fault, for I despised such weapons as cumbrous and unsoldierly. This contempt, together with my great preference for the crossbow, and our good old English longbow and clothyard shaft, caused me to profit but little by Captain Roland's lessons in the use of those treacherous and murderous weapons, which, with loud noise and great stench and smoke, propel a lump of base lead into a man's vitals, without giving him a chance of getting out of the way or parrying the shot. Nor have I anything to repent me of for this neglect of Captain Wyke's teachings in the use of firearms. I say nothing of ordnance, which may be of the utmost importance at sieges, and on other special occasions; but of firearms of the smaller sort, I can aver from my own experiences in the Indian wars that he would be but a poor bowman who could not shoot half-a-dozen times, with good aim, for the once that an arquebus or matchlock might be discharged. Wherefore I think less of the latter kind of arms than of the bow and crossbow. In addition to the military acquirements I have herein mentioned, I was fairly well versed in grammatical studies, could read my Latin prayer-book with ease, knew a little French, and was proficient in Spanish, as every gentleman should be.

This brief account of my early life I give as a necessary introduction to the adventures it is my purpose herein to relate. For I am fully conscious that the minute narrative of the life of a private and unimportant person is of little interest to others, however noteworthy and remarkable some of his experiences may be. But I have also given the foregoing particulars because my training and education at my grandfather's house practically came to a close, and my manhood's life began thereupon, shortly after I had completed my twentieth year.

A little before that time my uncle William had gone to Ireland in the train of the Lord Deputy Skeffington, leaving orders that his son William and myself should follow him thither. Obedient to his command, we set out on horseback with three of our men from Hooton; rode to Bristol and then took ship to Dublin, where, on our arrival, we were most paternally received by my uncle, and comfortably lodged in his quarters in the Castle of Dublin. We soon came to learn that English law prevails in Ireland only in the district around Dublin which is called the Pale, and this is all the actual dominion of the King of England, though he has the title of "Lord of Ireland." Beyond the Pale the native princes and chiefs, and those of English origin who have adopted Irish manners, observe the ancient laws of the country; or, more commonly, observe no settled law at all, but act each as he pleases for his own interest. Hence there are constant wars and feuds in progress beyond the Pale, and frequently these spread within the Pale, or in one way or another embroil the government of Dublin in hostilities with the Irish and Irish-English.

In those wild wars, we of the house of Stanley had our full share during the eighteen months of my stay in that country. It never in that time happened to fall to our lot to have to go far into the interior, but we had many rough affrays with the native tribes of the O'Tools, O'Byrnes, and Cavanaghs, of the eastern districts. Nor did we always come off best on those occasions. In one memorable encounter our force, under command of my uncle, was surprised amongst the Wicklow mountains, and we were so badly beaten that all who were left of us had to fly for our lives, nor did we dare draw rein until we reached the walls of Dublin.

Our stay in Ireland was cut short by bad news from home. That sage, pious, and mild sovereign, King Henry VIII., after twenty years of godly and beneficent rule, became, through the machinations of the devil, a ferocious and impious tyrant and cruel monster. Like our first parent, Adam, he was led to his destruction by a woman—the frivolous-minded Lady Anne Boleyn—for love of whom he abandoned his saintly wife, Catherine, and broke with the Holy Father and the only true Church. For a time it was hoped that as his passions abated he would

repent of his errors, but as years went on it became plain that the Satanic influence over him was growing stronger and stronger. From repudiating the authority of the Holy Father he proceeded to the suppression of the lesser and greater monasteries, and from this to the persecution and slaying of Catholics. The executions of Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More, for refusing to recognise the ecclesiastical supremacy of the King, filled all true Catholics with horror and alarm, and the subsequent sentence of excommunication passed upon Henry by the head of the Church, broke the last link between him and his Catholic subjects.

The news of those troubles induced my uncle to hasten home from Ireland, taking me with him, but leaving his son behind in charge of the Lord Deputy. The Stanleys of Hooton had always been staunch and ardent Catholics; and in those troubled times our house became the refuge of some of the many thousands of monks and nuns who were cast homeless and penniless on the world by the sacrilegious and hypocritical confiscation of the monastic institutions. For a time the remoteness of Hooton from the Court served as a protection from the crowd of hungry and insatiable parasites who were ever inciting the king to further spoliations of the Church and her faithful adherents, in order to enrich themselves thereby.

But at length the wilds of Lancashire and Cheshire no longer availed as a shelter against those heretical plunderers. Commissioners arrived from London, and fixed their headquarters at Manchester. Hooton was visited by those children of Belial and their agents, and what with fines and penalties, bribes and presents, my grandfather was well-nigh ruined within a short space. The establishment became so reduced as to be almost broken up, and the many dependants upon Sir Geoffrey's bounty were forced to disperse and shift for themselves as best they could. My grandfather did not long survive this altered state of things. His own troubles, and the troubles of the State, so preyed upon him that he took to his bed and died quite broken-hearted within a little while.

I now thought the time had come when it would be

proper for me to go into the world on my own account. There was no future for me at Hooton, nor indeed in England, so far as I could see; and my uncle had cares and troubles enough of his own without being embarrassed with the duty of providing for me. I had, moreover, a longing to see the world, and a desire for foreign service under some Catholic prince. As Father Nicholas was about to return to Spain, I induced my uncle to permit me to accompany him. No sooner had this been settled, than my cousin Henry preferred a similar request, which at first was little to the taste of my uncle; but, after fully discussing the matter with Father Nicholas and Captain Wyke, he at length consented to let us both go together to seek our fortune in Spain. Father Nicholas promised to do all he could for us on our arrival in that country, and letters of commendation in our favour were prepared for us by my uncle and Captain Wyke, and addressed to clerical and lay personages known to the writers. These, it was hoped, would be of service to us when we got to Madrid. Other preparations for our departure were soon made, and then it only remained to find a ship to carry us to some convenient Spanish port.

On the opposite side of the Mersey to Hooton there is a small fishing village, or hamlet, known as Liverpool, which is occasionally visited by foreign ships, mostly Spanish, commonly contrabandists, and not infrequently concealed pirates. The wars in Ireland had long given much encouragement to ships of this dubious character; for the princes, lords, and chiefs of that country were good customers for arms, silk, cloth, wine, and other foreign commodities. Of late many such ships had found profitable employment in carrying ecclesiastical and other refugees from England to Spain, France, and the Netherlands. We soon came to learn of the presence at Liverpool of a Biscayan ship—an honest enough trader, as it proved—which was on the point of sailing for Bilbao. This was not the most convenient port from which to reach Madrid; but it was decided that we should not miss the opportunity presented of getting to Spain, and accordingly a passage was secured in the Biscayan for Father Nicholas, Henry Stanley, and myself. Sir William, in spite of his reduced fortune, liberally supplied our purses, and dismissed us

on our adventures with a fervent blessing and a promise to remember us constantly in his prayers.

We sailed from Liverpool, and made a good and sufficiently expeditious voyage of ten days' duration to Bilbao. There we rested ourselves for a few days, during which we hired guides and purchased mules and provisions for our long journey to Madrid.

CHAPTER II.

Arrival in Madrid—New Expedition for Florida—De Soto—Failure of former Expeditions—Henry and I seek to join—Success—We sail with De Soto and the Army—Its Composition and Equipment—Arrival at the Canaries—At Cuba—De Soto assumes Governorship—Juan de Anasco sent forward to Florida—His Success and Return with Indian Guides—Everything ready—The Ships and their Freights—A splendid Expedition.

OUR journey from Bilbao to Madrid was long and toilsome, and not free from dangers. We passed through a great mountain region full of precipices and gorges and roaring torrents, which at times turned us aside from our proper course, and in other ways caused us loss of time. On the higher grounds it was bitterly cold, the winter (we were told by our guides) being unusually long and severe. There were dangers, too, from savage beasts (wolves and bears), and scarcely less savage outlaws and robbers. However, we suffered only from the weather, and got at last into the more level and open country, and a better climate, and thereafter had more ease and made better speed. As for lodgings, we mostly stayed at monasteries and other religious houses (of which there were great numbers), and in such places we were always made welcome and hospitably treated.

Coming, in fine, to the capital of the great Spanish empire, we found it in a sort of uproar, because of the preparations being made by the famous hidalgo Hernando De Soto, for a new venture to the Indies. This lord had not long come back from the kingdom of Peru, where he had been, as it were, the right hand of Pizarro in the conquest of that rich state. De Soto had gone thither a penniless gentleman, and had come back with much treasure. The Emperor Charles V. had ennobled him, and he had secured in marriage the hand of a noble and agreeable lady. But he was not content to live at home in

peace and comfort, but must needs dream of seeking fresh conquests and more glory and riches in those unknown regions of the Western Indies lying to the north of the great gulf or sea of Mexico. At one time it was thought that this country reached towards Cathay on the further or western side, and stretched northward to the frozen seas; but it is now certain that the first opinion is wrong, and it is yet doubtful if the second is right. There is a western ocean of great width lying beyond the *terra firma* of Florida, and dividing it from Cathay and the Indies lying on that side of the world, east from Europe and higher Asia. So far as the country was known or imagined, it had got the name of Florida, and this because the southern part of it, north of Cuba, and in the form of a peninsula, was first discovered on Pascha Florida, or (as the English say) Palm Sunday; likewise (it is said) because of the great abundance of flowers seen there by those who first set foot upon its shores.

Before De Soto's expedition, there had been earlier attempts at penetrating to the interior of this vast country, and disclosing its limits and condition; but only with the utmost misfortune to every adventurer. Of them the first was Ponce de Leon, and he, and most of those with him, were killed in fight with the natives. After him other Spaniards of low order came to the shores of Florida, and, whenever they could, seized upon the natives, and carried them off to Cuba to serve as slaves; committing great cruelties, and many slayings and burnings, in this lawless work. Thus it fell out that when the Cavalier Vasquez de Ayllon led a more regular force into the country to explore its interior, he, and nearly every man of his, perished miserably, and with much torture, at the hands of the natives. These, for revenge, lulled the Spaniards into a sense of security by hospitality, and every mark of friendship, and then treacherously fell upon and overcame them. After Vasquez, and about ten years before we came to Madrid, Pamphilo de Navarez invaded Florida with a great armament, and a commission from the Emperor. He sought for gold, but only found hosts of fierce warriors, of vast size and strength, who harassed him day and night, and inflicted constant losses upon him. This was mostly in a province called by the Indians Apalachee. In the

end, the Spaniards were utterly destroyed, and it was long thought that no single man of them had escaped; but, to the wonder of everybody, the year before we came to Madrid, that is, the year 1537, one of the leaders, named Alva Nunez, appeared in Spain, having first landed at Lisbon, in Portugal, after unheard-of adventures. He had been enslaved by the Indians, and, suffering many hardships, had been passed from tribe to tribe, far away towards the west, crossing mighty rivers, hideous deserts, and high mountain ranges, until he got at last to the western ocean, and the Spanish settlement of Compostella on its eastern shore.

I have thought it well to speak shortly of those earlier explorations in Florida, because they serve to illumine that which is to follow. Their miscarriage, one and all, did not daunt De Soto. He judged that, in the boundless and undiscovered regions of Florida, there must be empires as rich as Mexico, or even Peru; and he thought that, with a stronger and altogether better force than any that had gone before, and, above all, with a policy of kindness towards the natives, he should succeed where the others had failed.

Seeing and hearing all that was going on, Henry and I thought, here was a hopeful chance for us, if only we could become engaged in the expedition of De Soto. But this was no easy matter, for the number of the company was to be no more than one thousand, of all arms and degrees, and already many more than that (mostly noble gentlemen, accoutred at their own charge) were offering themselves. Whilst thinking of what was best to be done, we found out that the commander of the halberdiers of De Soto's body-guard was none other than that Christopher Spinola to whom Captain Roland Wyke had given us a letter. Thereupon we hastened to pay our respects to Spinola, and deliver him the letter. He received us very kindly, and, having read our letter, protested his desire to fully honour the recommendations of his old friend and comrade. We then spoke of our desire to join the expedition, and he promised to help us as he best could. In the end, his influence, backed by the good offices of Father Nicholas, procured us admission into the halberdiers as gentlemen volunteers; but first we had to pass a strict inspection as to our health and strength, and also to give proofs of our

military knowledge and skill. Then we were sent on to Seville, which was the place of assembly for the whole army.

I need not dwell upon things of small moment, nor set down our trivial experiences until the time we embarked at San Lucian de Barameda. The fleet consisted of seven large and three small ships, with well-nigh nine hundred men on board. Most of these, common soldiers and officers, were Spanish, but there was a good company of Portuguese gentlemen, and a few of other nations—as Italians, French, Germans, Flemish, one Irishman named O'Donel, and we two English. There were twenty-four ecclesiastics, twelve being priests; likewise a number of skilled mechanics, and some negro and Moorish slaves. All the public cost of the expedition, and a good deal of the private charges of officers and men, were borne by De Soto, whose whole fortune was thus engaged in the enterprise. On this account, as well as for the better assurement of the success of the expedition, the Emperor made him Captain-General of Cuba, as well as Adelantado, or Governor of all Florida.

We sailed from San Lucian on the 6th of April, 1538, and in fifteen days arrived at the Canaries, and (having stayed there three days) in a month thereafter reached Santiago de Cuba. From thence we sailed to Havañah. In all we stayed three months in Cuba, the Governor visiting the chief towns and districts, appointing officers, making arrangements for the administration of affairs during his absence, and completing all things for the expedition. Meanwhile, Juan de Anasco, the Contador, had been sent forward with a brigantine to spy out a proper port in Florida. He duly returned with a good report, bringing with him four Indian prisoners, who, it was hoped, might serve as guides to the interior of the country. Several volunteers were allowed to join the army at Cuba, which was now nearly 1,000 strong. We likewise took on board 350 horses and thirteen sows, mostly in young. Nothing was wanting for the equipment of an army setting out for the conquest or colonization of an extensive country, and I was assured and believed that no better or more brilliant force than this of De Soto had ever been organised by a Spanish commander for exploration and conquest in the Western Indies.

CHAPTER III.

Departure from Havañah—Blown from our course—Arrival on the Coast of Florida—Natives hostile—Landing and taking possession—Night attack on Camp—Cavalry charge—How the Indians shoot—Occupation of a deserted town—Structure and arrangements—Ships sent back to Havañah—Examination of country—The fugitive cacique—His former barbarous treatment—Will not be mollified—Attempt to secure him—A march through the woods—Battle—Wounded and made prisoner.

THE fleet sailed from Havañah on the 12th of May, 1539, with a favourable wind and every appearance of fine weather. At the end of a couple of days, however, there came a strong wind from the east and north-east, which forced us far out of our course into the gulf of Mexico. It was not until the end of thirteen days out from Havañah that we were able to make the western side of the peninsula of Florida at a deep bay, which in memory of the day (being Whit Sunday) we called the Bay of Espiritu Santo.* This part of Florida had been ravaged by Spanish slave seekers, and the natives most barbarously used; and, as a consequence, we found them on the alert and bitterly hostile. The Governor, seeing this, did not dare to disembark until a favourable landing place had been selected and secured. He ordered soundings to be obtained, and other precautions taken; and some days elapsed before a satisfactory place was found. It was not until the last day of May that three hundred of the troops were disembarked, and the country taken possession of in the name of Charles V. The natives showed no hostility during the day, nor for best part of the night; but shortly before dawn the camp was aroused by savage yells and whoops, and the onward rush of numbers of Indians, who sent clouds of arrows flying

* Now known as Tampa Bay.

through the air. The Governor not having gone on shore, we of his body-guard were not with those who had landed; but we could hear from the ships the great uproar and the alarms of drums and trumpets in the camp, and as soon as it was dawn we saw the soldiers crowded on the beach in much confusion and panic. Boats were sent from the ships with fresh troops and seven horses, and the moment these latter reached the strand they were backed by cavaliers, who charged boldly upon the Indians.

The Indians of Florida are brave and dauntless warriors, and rarely quail before white men, though they have naught but their naked bodies, and poor weapons of wood or stone, wherewith to confront enemies clad in armour or leather, and bearing bucklers and steel swords and lances. But horses are unknown amongst them, and of such they have in warfare the greatest dread, taking them to be supernatural creatures. No sooner, then, did the horsemen come upon them in this combat, than they turned about and fled away into the thickets with all speed. One horse only was struck with an arrow, shot by a bold Indian who stayed a little behind his comrades, and drew his bow against the foremost horse as if to see whether or not it could be injured. As soon as the cavaliers got back to the camp this horse dropped dead, to the surprise of everyone, for it had shown no signs of being badly hurt. An examination disclosed a flint-tipped arrow, which had been shot with such force as to pass through the saddle and its housings, and bury itself for one-third of its length between the animal's ribs. We had examples later on of equally wonderful shots, showing with how great force the Indians can send arrows, even when the tips are not of flint, but merely hardened by fire.

We were not again troubled at this place by the natives, and after a few day's rest the army marched along the coast two leagues northward (the ships sailing in the same direction) to a large village, which we found deserted. Here, in a kind of temple, surmounted with the image of a bird with gilded eyes, a quantity of pearls was found, but all injured by being bored with red hot copper spikes in order to string them for necklaces. Afterwards we came upon great quantities of similar pearls in the native temples and charnel-houses.

The village in which we were now quartered was (as is customary in this land) called by the name of its chief, Ucita; but it had also another name, difficult to pronounce, which I have forgotten. It contained, besides many huts in the outskirts, several large timber houses, each capable of lodging many people. At one end was the house of the chief, or kathick (cacique, according to the Spanish spelling), perched upon an artificial mound, and so constructed as to serve for a fortress. It was reached by a narrow road or pathway, fenced on each side by a strong wall of trunks of trees interlaced with branches and tendrils of the wild vine. This is the manner in all the villages in those parts; but very often the walls so constructed enclose the whole place, and are smoothly plastered over with kneaded clay. De Soto took up his quarters in the chief's house, and the others were turned into barracks, stables, and store houses for provisions, arms and ammunition, tools, and materials of every description landed from the ships. The ground around the town to the distance of a bow-shot was cleared of trees and undergrowth, so that the cavalry might act if necessary, and patrols and sentinels were appointed for regular service to guard against surprise, especially at night. Several of the largest vessels were ordered back to Havañah; only the caravel and the two brigantines being kept. Herein the Governor sought to follow the example of Cortes, and some sagacious captains of antiquity, who by similar means made their soldiers feel that they must depend upon their own courage and resources, and that they were wholly committed to the enterprise in hand.

It being at this time the intention of De Soto to make the town of Ucita the head depôt for supplies, he gave orders for its proper fortification, and decided to leave there a strong garrison of foot and horse, while he advanced into the interior of the country at the head of the main army. Meanwhile the country round the town was explored by parties of cavalry, in order to discover its nature and resources, and what enemies there might be in the neighbourhood. The Governor was very desirous of establishing friendly relations with the natives, in order to procure guides and carriers for his march into the interior. This could only be done through the cacique, who lay concealed in a thick wood some distance off. From this retreat he

could not be drawn by all the friendly messages sent to him by De Soto through natives who had been captured and released with presents and fair words. This was no wonder, for ten years before Ucita had suffered the most intolerable wrongs at the hands of Navarez. This Spanish commander, in a transport of rage, and in flagrant violation of a recent treaty of peace and amity, had caused the chief's nose to be cut off, and his mother to be torn to pieces by bloodhounds before his face. Wrongs such as those are unpardonable by ordinary Christians, much less unbaptised heathens. De Soto was by nature a kind and humane man, and when he came to hear of those things he was truly grieved; and now pity, not less strongly than policy, made him wish to be friends with the chief, and make him such amends as lay in his power. So all the Indians of his who were made prisoners he treated very kindly, and released them with gifts. By some of them he sent valuable presents to the hidden cacique, with many friendly messages. But only bitter and scornful words were sent back by way of answer. To one message he made the reply: "I want neither their words nor their presents; bring me their heads and then I shall rejoice."

De Soto at length lost all hope of making friends with Ucita by fair words and means, and also he was unwilling to leave in his rear an enemy so bitter and implacable, who might cut him off from communication with the coast when he advanced further inland. In this difficulty he formed the resolve of trying to capture the chief, so as to keep him with him as a hostage, but with all honourable treatment. The enterprise being one of some hazard, as well as nicety, he took it into his own hands. Having gathered such information as he could about the lurking place of the cacique, he took a hundred men, half of them horsemen, and set out an hour before dawn under the guidance of an old and friendly Indian, who knew that part of the country, though he was not of Ucita's people. Henry Stanley and I were of the party, and we both rejoiced thereat, though for me the occasion well-nigh proved my last, as it was my first, experience of real fighting; though by the mercy of God and the protection of the holy saints, my life, limbs, and liberty, were in the end spared.

After a rapid march of six hours, we came near the place

where the cacique was hidden. The way to it was along a narrow path, cut through the thick undergrowth of a great and swampy forest. A little way along the path we came suddenly upon a palisade, the posts of which were interwoven with wild vine and other tendrils, as good as ropes of hemp for the purpose. This defence was guarded by Indians, who greeted us with flights of arrows. De Soto dismounted, and led some of the footmen against the palisade, armed with swords and axes; but the place was so strait, that only two or three could engage in front at one time, though the men behind them could make some use of their crossbows from sundry points of vantage.

Though the Indians fought with good resolution, we prevailed in the end, and drove them off, breaking and cutting through the palisade. But when we made a further advance, we found ourselves face to face with another palisade, made like the first, and just as stoutly defended. This, too, we carried, after some hard fighting, again only to discover that there was a third similar defence further on. In truth, we found in the end that there were no fewer than seven or eight of those impediments to our forward march, for the possession of every one of which we had to fight. With much heat and labour, and most fatal loss of time for our purpose, we gained one defence after another, until at length we came to a clear space in the midst of the wild and ragged forest, with a little hut or cabin in the centre. The Indians had all disappeared, and the cabin was empty, though a fire was still alight on the floor, and there were other signs of late habitation. All was plain enough—the cage was there, but the bird had flown—we had lost too much time, and all our labour had been for nothing. It was for scarcely more than form sake that the almost impenetrable forest round about was searched as well as might be. Nowhere could the cacique, or, indeed, any of his men, be found; and at length the Governor, deeply mortified, gave the order to return, after the men had rested and refreshed themselves, and provision had been made for carrying back the wounded; for none of our party were killed outright, for all the hard fighting.

It happened that some of the soldiers, in searching about in the forest, had come upon what seemed to be a fair open road running in the direction of our return. The Governor,

having inspected this road, resolved to return by it, as a way to be preferred to the narrow and incommodious path through the forest by which we had come, and which was in no way fit for horses. The old Indian guide made signs of disagreement, either to imply that he did not know that way back, or did not like it for some reason, which he had not words enough to explain for our comprehension. However, his objection, whatever it might be, was unheeded, and the force set out on its return march along the newly-found road.

For about the distance of a mile the road was good, and all went well. Then we came to a swampy place, and very difficult ground for the horses. They sunk deep into the soft soil, and some were in danger of being lost. This threw us into disorder, our ranks being broken up in our efforts to extricate the horses, and get them to more solid ground. Suddenly, in the midst of our confusion, there arose in the woods around us terrific yells, and before the least attempt could be made to re-form our ranks, the Indians were upon us. My share in the earlier fighting was the using of my crossbow at a safe distance; now I was engaged in a real battle at closest quarters. Spaniards and Indians were altogether mixed up, and every man had to do what he could for his own hand, without trusting to his comrades for help, for we were without formation of any kind, and greatly outnumbered. Moreover, our horses were of no use in such a marshy place. It was altogether a hand-to-hand battle of men on foot, which would have been over in brief space, to our destruction, but for our better weapons and our body armour. On all sides resounded the noise of blows, the shouts and war-cries of the Spaniards, and, above all, the diabolical yells of the Indians, which were blood-curdling and most inhuman. How I bore myself, I cannot well say, for the strangeness of the circumstances greatly discomposed me, and filled my mind with confusion. However, I know I struck away right vigorously with my broadsword at all the Indians within my reach; at times charging hither and thither with much fury, but with nothing at all of the purpose and coolness which come only from warlike experience. Whilst thus employed, I happened to see my cousin a little way off, beset by four or five naked savages, who were striking at

him with clubs and unstrung bows, he confronting them alone. I at once ran to his aid, and with the help of a soldier who joined us at the same time, we cut down two of the Indians, and drove the rest back towards the forest. I followed them up, and laid one of them low just at the edge of the wood; but had hardly done so when out rushed a crowd of Indians, who were upon me in a moment. Before I could strike a blow in my defence, my sword was knocked out of my hand, and a terrible blow on the head felled me to the ground and left me senseless.

CHAPTER IV.

In the hands of the Indians—Fellow captives—Ucita threatens—A Ministering Angel—The place of torture—Death of three Spaniards—My turn—The Cacique's daughter—Saved—Guardian of the Cemetery—Interview with Aymay—Falling in love—Slaying the great panther—Delusive hopes.

HOW long I remained insensible I cannot say. I only know that I was aroused from that state by being roughly carried through the forest by a couple of big Indians, who had hold of me by the legs and shoulders. I then realised that I was a captive in the hands of cruel enemies of an evil repute for inflicting horrible tortures on their captives. It was night-time, and the forest was perfectly still, save for the noise made by my bearers passing along. I judged from this that I must have remained insensible for a long time, and that I had been carried some distance from the scene of the conflict. As soon as I had collected my senses a little and realised my position, I made a violent struggle to free myself from my bearers. This was not so much from any design to escape, for that I felt to be impossible at the moment, but on account of the intolerable pain I was suffering by being carried in such a manner. The Indians allowed me to get my feet on the ground, still keeping fast hold of me; and I made them understand by signs and motions that I did not want to escape, but was unable to endure their rough method of carrying me. I was, in truth, willing enough to walk as well as my strength would permit, and I found on trial that I could walk fairly well; though a wound in my side was painful, and I was bruised and sore all over, and weak from loss of blood. Having come to this understanding with the Indians, I walked for some time between them, each keeping a firm grip on my wrist. But the inconvenience of this mode of keeping me secure appeared

to strike them after a time; and, having talked together for a while, they tied my hands securely behind my back with a long tendril of wild vine, the ends of which they kept hold of. In this way we continued our journey all through the night, with intervals of rest. At daybreak I found we were out of the forest and in an open country, and obviously making our way to a village not very far in the distance, and of no great size.

At the entrance to the village a party of Indians at once took charge of me, and rudely thrust me into a small and miserable hut with an earthen floor, the open doorway of which was hung with a half-rotten reed mat. Here, to my surprise, I found three of our soldiers made fast, hands and feet, by leather thongs to stakes driven into the ground. I was not myself similarly secured, for the Indians, seeing that I was badly wounded, and faint from loss of blood and from fatigue, made signs to me to occupy a sort of rough bed in one corner of the hut, consisting of a heap of coarse dried grass covered with a deer skin. They untied my hands, and I gladly threw myself upon the couch; but I could get no sleep, though most thoroughly worn out and exhausted. My mind was occupied with the events of the previous day, my body was sore, and I discovered that I had received a severe injury to the back of my head, probably inflicted by the hoof of one of our horses as I lay on the ground during the *melée;* I was feverish and delirious, and parched with thirst. All the morning the Indians kept coming in and going out of the hut, gesticulating and threatening us; and this also added to my unrest. To my signs for water they paid no attention, but seemed rather to exult in my sufferings. Later in the morning the cacique visited us, attended by a number of the leading Indians. I knew him then by his mutilated face, and I had afterwards good cause to know who he was. His language and gestures were angry and menacing; but these did not prevent me from repeating to him the signs I had made for water. I was desperate and half-delirious, and in no wise daunted by his furious language and looks. I suppose he saw that the vengeance he meditated would be but poorly gratified by letting me die there and then, for shortly after he went away an Indian boy brought us an abundant and most grateful supply of water in a large earthen vessel.

This was followed later on by a great bowl of boiled maize, sufficient for all four of us.

During the day I learned from my fellow-prisoners that, like myself, they had been borne down in the battle by the rush of Indians, and had been disarmed and carried off without being able to make much resistance. None of them received serious injuries. Of the results of the conflict they could tell me nothing, for they had been made prisoners whilst it was still in progress; but we made no doubt that the Spaniards must have succeeded in the end in driving off the Indians and making good their retreat. I felt some anxiety for the safety of my cousin Henry, but in my present circumstances could only hope that no great harm had befallen him.

As night came on, my feverish condition increased and continued getting worse. My sleep was broken by delirious fancies and imaginings, and I wandered in my talk. At one time I thought that someone was tenderly bathing and dressing my wounds, and in the dim light of the early dawn I imagined I saw the slim form of an Indian girl stooping over me, and anointing my wounds with some oily substance. This, at least, I subsequently found was not wholly a delusion, for after a period of comparatively easy repose I awoke to find that I had indeed received such kindly attention from someone, my condition being thereby immensely improved. But this feeling of comfort and relief was not destined to last long.

While it was still early in the day the Indians came into the hut, unbound my companions, and made signs to me to get up. Then they stripped us naked, and we judged that now our hour had come, and that we were to be sacrificed to the vengeance of the cacique. For me, I could hardly walk, and was scarcely sensible enough to realise what was going on. Supported by two Indians I was taken to the open space in the middle of the village, where I was allowed to sit down on the ground. As I waited for my turn, I saw my three companions put to death one after another in a barbarous manner. Each in his turn was made to run round the open space while being shot at by the Indians. To prolong the misery of the victims and the enjoyment of their tormentors, only one Indian was allowed to shoot at them at a time. It was sad to see the

poor Spaniards running from place to place in their agony, seeking to escape the cruel shafts, which hardly ever failed to strike them in some part of their bodies. When at last they bristled with arrows and could afford no more amusement, the Indians rushed upon them and beat out their brains with their clubs and heavy bows.

My turn came when the last of the Spaniards had perished in this miserable manner. The Indians gathered around me in consultation. It was easy to see that I could not afford them the same kind of sport my companions had supplied them with, and they seemed to differ amongst themselves as to the best way of dealing with me. At last the matter seemed to be referred to the cacique, who had come up and joined in the conference. I looked wistfully at him, and for a time thought that he showed upon his deformed but otherwise noble and handsome face, some signs of pity for my youth and deplorable condition. But as he closed the conference with an impatient wave of his hand towards me I felt sure that he had, in the action, discarded any idea of mercy which he might have momentarily entertained, and had abandoned me to my fate, whatever that might be. I was not long left in doubt; for as I lay there, inwardly praying to God, I was witness to the preparations being made to put me to a painful death.

Under a tall, solitary tree the Indians made a great fire of branches and timber, and as it burnt up they busied themselves in constructing a sort of open hurdle, or gigantic gridiron, out of thick green osiers and canes. This they hung by long vine tendrils from the spreading branches of the tree in such a manner as to bring it over the fire, by this time burnt down to a thick bed of red and glowing embers. I realized what they meant—I was to be roasted alive, and slowly, on this rough grid! I now abandoned all hope and resigned myself to my fate, invoking the aid of St. Lawrence the Martyr, to enable me to die with Christian fortitude. The savages seized me, and drawing the hurdle to one side stretched me upon my back, securing my wrists and ankles to it by thongs of raw hide. Then they let go, and the hurdle began to swing to and fro over the hot fire.

At first I did not feel the heat much, but as the grid lost motion, and gradually settled over the fire, my sufferings

commenced, and rapidly became unendurable. My fortitude gave way, and, despite my will, a long, low cry of agony escaped from me. It found an echo somewhere in the crowd of Indians surrounding me, and for a moment I saw the Indian girl, my visionary benefactress of the night before, rush towards the place of my execution, with streaming hair and violent gestures. I have but a confused notion of what followed; but before I quite lost consciousness, I knew that something was being done for my rescue. I saw the girl and an elderly woman (her mother, as I afterwards heard) apparently entreating the grim-visaged cacique—I saw the flitting forms of Indians busy about me—and I remembered no more, until I awoke in a strange house, and found myself stretched on a bed of reeds, with Indian women tending me kindly.

The Indian girl was the daughter of the cacique. At the last moment she and her mother had begged my life from the cacique. The daughter had gone so far as to threaten to cast herself into the fire if her father did not relent. He did so, and I escaped with my life. I came to know in time that he was not naturally a cruel or bloodthirsty man, but that, in consequence of what the Spaniards had done, he had sworn some terrible oath to pursue them with unrelenting vengeance.

For many days and nights I lay suffering on my bed of reeds, sometimes delirious and unconscious, at other times more or less sensible. My back and thighs had been badly burnt, and my other wounds were likewise painful. I was well and tenderly nursed by the Indian women. They brought me food and clothing, and dressed my injuries with ointments, lotions, and herbs. At times I was aware of the presence of the two women who had interceded for me, and I took opportunities of kissing their hands, with tears of gratitude, and every demonstration of what I felt, but could not express in words which they might understand.

It was a long time before I recovered, but my body still bears many a deep scar, which it will carry to the grave. When I was able to get about, I was left unbound and unconfined, but I was closely watched by all the Indians, and made to understand that if I made the least attempt to escape, I should at once be put to death. I was secretly

prepared to take this risk at a proper time, but for the present I knew I was not in a fit state to attempt to get away, and likewise ignorant of the country around. For the time being, therefore, I was content to remain, and I endeavoured to make myself useful and popular amongst the Indians. The women were all compassionate and friendly, but the men were mostly harsh and brutal. I sought to soften them a little by showing them things of which they were ignorant; and, in particular, displaying to them my dexterity with the longbow, which they admired and praised. The cacique I always tried to avoid; for though he had spared my life, he seemed to hate the sight of me, and bore himself as if he half repented of his clemency.

I think it was partly to keep me out of the cacique's sight, and partly because of my skill with the bow, that I was appointed to a duty which I was far from relishing. This was to guard the village graveyard, or place where the Indians deposited their dead. It was a lonely field in the midst of a forest, some way from the village. The bodies were not buried in the earth, but placed in wooden coffins, or boxes covered with loose boards, kept down by stones, or logs of wood. Owing to this, and the situation of the place, wild beasts often tore open the lids, and carried off the dead bodies. It now became my task to watch this place day and night, and I was plainly made to understand that if I allowed a single body to be carried off, I should be burnt alive without hope of mercy.

In this lonely and melancholy place I took up my abode in a small cabin, or watch-house, made of wattles and clay. Food was regularly and liberally supplied to me, and sometimes those who brought it, or others friendly disposed towards me, would give me their company for a while. With such visitors I endeavoured to converse in their own language; and in return for their assistance, I taught them Spanish names and other words, and found them very quick at learning. In this way I made rapid progress in their tongue, and in a few months' time was able to express myself very intelligibly in it.

Two things greatly reconciled me to my life of isolation in the cemetery. One was my freedom from the dread presence and terrible scowl of the cacique. Before him, I always had the feeling that he was balancing in his mind

whether he ought not to destroy me out of hand, and that the slightest impulse might cause him to do so. So I was thankful to be in the cemetery out of his sight. The other reason for my contentment arose from the occasional visits I received from the wife and daughter of Ucita. Towards them, my heart was full of the tenderest emotions of gratitude. They had comforted and befriended me in my anguish of mind and body, and to them I owed my salvation from a dreadful and heathenish death.

The daughter, whose name was Aymay, was young, and truly beautiful, and I could not help falling deeply in love with her. Soon our interviews at the cemetery became real lovers' meetings, though free from secrecy, and perfectly innocent. Her mother, or a sister, often came with her, and always showed me much kindness. They recognised my love for Aymay without mystification or pretence, and seemed pleased, or, it might be, amused at the devotion of the white stranger to the Indian maiden.

The Indians of Florida have dark eyes, long black hair, and reddish-brown skins; but some in the more eastern parts of the country are of lighter complexion (a few having even grey-blue eyes), and seem to be of an original different from the rest of the natives. In effect, the Spaniards were told that this foreign origin was believed in by the Indians themselves, who have a tradition that many ages ago the ancestors of their fairer countrymen had come from the eastern sea in large canoes, and were white people, with blue eyes, and fair or red hair. Some such story as this, I was informed, had been heard by the Spaniards in Mexico; but, for myself, I know not what to think of a tale which seems equally incredible, whether as a truth, or as an invention of the natives. The Indian women are lighter in complexion than the men, and the younger ones, and those of the better sort—daughters of the caciques and lords—very little different in colour from the women of Spain, or than some in that part of England which I came from. Aymay was of this lighter complexion; sixteen years of age when I first knew her, thin and shapely in form, though not tall, and with very beautiful hands and feet. Her features were fine and regular, her face generally somewhat favouring the cast of countenance I had seen amongst Jews and Moors in Spain. Anyone might well have loved her

for her beauty and her gentle nature; how much more so I, for the mercy and pity she had shown me? But how all this was to end I knew not, for withal she was an unbaptized pagan, and I a miserable slave, who might at any time be slain by her father, with as little compunction as if I were a dog. However, I trusted to time, and the providence of God, to solve those difficulties; but I knew that, come what might, I should never forget, nor cease to love Aymay.

One night as I was on guard as usual at the cemetery, I became weary of watching, and lay down on the ground, overpowered by sleep, my bow and arrows by my side. Towards morning I was awakened by the noise of the lid of one of the chests falling. I started to my feet and ran to the spot whence the noise had proceeded. There, to my horror, I saw that one of the chests had been rifled of the body of an infant recently deceased, the child of an Indian of note. I knew the penalty which awaited my default, unless I could remedy it, and plunged at once into the forest, resolved to recover the body, or, failing in this, to flee from the fate which would await me. After a little time I heard a noise like the crunching of bones by a dog. Creeping along very cautiously, I saw in the dim light the form of a large beast crouching in the thicket over some prey. With a muttered prayer to God and St. Sebastian, I took aim as well as I could, and, drawing an arrow to its head, let fly. I could not see the effect of my shot; but the creature never moved, and I hoped I had killed it, though I did not dare to advance to see whether this was so or not. Remaining where I was until day dawned, I then saw I had killed a great cat-like beast (which I afterwards knew to be called a panther), the arrow having passed through its entrails and pierced its heart. I was still more pleased to find the body of the child, not greatly mutilated; and taking it up I made all speed back to the cemetery and carefully replaced it in its chest, and arranged the lid as before. I then returned to the forest, and by great exertions dragged the carcase of the beast in triumph to the village. This exploit gained me much credit with the Indians, and even Ucita seemed to look less sternly upon me. The animal I had slain had long infested the cemetery, and been the terror of the village; and owing to

its ferocity and extraordinary size, it was looked upon as something supernatural.

About this time a great feast was being prepared in honour of a powerful prince who was coming to pay a visit to Ucita. To this feast I was bidden, and I now thought that my safety was secured, and my peace made with Ucita. I was mistaken in both respects. Ucita could never permanently abandon his resentment against the white men, of whom I was one; and some untoward events at the feast itself rekindled his wrath against me, and impelled him to seek my life once more.

CHAPTER V.

Tuscaluza and his mission—His anger and my danger—A timely warning—My flight—I surprise two Indians—Reception by the Cacique Mucozo—Mutual friendship—I give him good advice and many promises—I set out to rejoin the army—Attacked by Spaniards as an Indian—My man Choquo.

THE great chief came with a large following of stately warriors, dressed in magnificent skins gaily bedecked with feathers and pictures of animals in bright colours. On their heads and down their backs they wore plumes and rows of feathers, and the sides of their loose leggings or trousers were similarly decorated. Their surcoats or mantles were of bear or buffalo skins, beautifully prepared, thick, soft, and glossy. I gathered that their chief had come thither to inform himself of the new invasion of the country by white men; news of which had been spread abroad by Ucita with the object of forming a confederation of all the Indian nations against the Spaniards.

The chief's name was Tuscaluza—a name which the Spaniards had afterwards good reason to become familiar with. He was a man of about forty years of age; and his general appearance corresponded well with the reputation he bore. He was of gigantic stature and powerful frame, very proud and haughty in bearing. He towered a foot and a half above his attendant chiefs; but he was so well proportioned and admirably formed in limbs and features, that he was, altogether, the finest man I had ever set eyes on.

The festivities lasted for three days, during which the greatest freedom and ease were permitted to everyone, myself included. Elated by my new sense of liberty, I was not sufficiently on my guard against exciting the ill-will of those who had so many reasons for disliking and distrusting

the white man. Nor did I then know that the great Tuscaluza, although already married, and having a son as big as himself, had looked with favourable eyes on the beautiful Aymay, and (with the approval of Ucita) contemplated making her his wife. In the exciting freedom of those festive days I did not conceal my attachment for Aymay. Tuscaluza saw it, and became angry and jealous. Of this I was unconscious, and had no suspicion that I was in danger, until one night Aymay and her sister came secretly to me, in the hut in the village where I was lodged during the festival, and told me of my peril. They informed me that their father, partly influenced by Tuscaluza, had determined to sacrifice me at the stake on the next day. Their mother had pleaded her best for me; but the cacique would listen to nothing in my favour, and had firmly resolved that I should die by fire. Finding him immovable, the mother and her daughters had considered what was best to be done, and had arranged a plan of escape for me. The mother was sister to a neighbouring cacique, whose name was Mucozo, and with him I was to seek refuge and ask for hospitality and protection in his sister's name. They gave me a small wooden image of a tortoise, which they said would be a sign to Mucozo that I came from his sister. "This very night," said Aymay, "you must go secretly to the north end of the village, and there you will find a trusty friend who will guide you to a bridge about two leagues from here. He will then point out the right road for you to take, and you must then let him come back at once, so that he may reach home before morning dawns; otherwise he would be suspected of helping you to escape, and he and all of us might be destroyed. Follow the road he points out to you for six leagues, and you will reach the village where Mucozo lives. Show him the little tortoise, which is the totem of his family, tell him who sends you, and he will certainly befriend you. Go, go at once, and may the Great Spirit of white man and Indian protect you!" With these words she threw herself into my arms with tears and kisses. After a long embrace, and passionate pledges of perpetual love and fidelity, we parted, not knowing if we should ever meet again. Aymay and her sister stole away through the darkness as quietly and as secretly as they had come, and I crept cautiously from the

hut and made my way as directed to the north end of the village.

True to the plan which the mother had arranged, I found the Indian waiting for me at the end of the village. Making myself known to him, we went away quickly and softly, without alarming anyone. In due time we reached the bridge over the river, and the Indian having shown me a well-beaten track beyond it, left me to pursue it by myself. I followed the path all night, and, soon after daybreak, came to the banks of a small stream, which I judged could not be far from the village of Mucozo. Looking cautiously around I saw two Indians fishing, and as I could not pass them without being observed, I paused to consider what was best to be done. Notwithstanding my dress of skins, they could not fail to see that I was a white man, and therefore their first impulse would probably be to kill me as an enemy. If I could only gain time to parley with them I should be safe. I saw that they had left their weapons some distance away from the place where they were engaged in fishing, and I thought if I could secure these I should have time to explain myself to them. I ran swiftly to the place and took possession of the weapons, crying out to the Indians (who had turned round and were gazing at me with astonishment) that I was a friend. Without attending to my words or signs, they ran at the top of their speed to the village and gave the alarm. Presently the inhabitants sallied out, armed, and advanced to attack me. I fixed an arrow in my bow to let them see that I intended to defend myself, and at the same time called out in their language that I was a friend, and was bringing a message to their cacique from his sister. At this they paused and held a consultation, at the end of which an old Indian advanced towards me with outstretched hands, to show that he was unarmed. I immediately took the arrow from my bow, and signed to him to come on. When he came up to me I explained to him as well as I could what my business was, showing him the little wooden tortoise, which I had carried in a skin pouch. This appeared to satisfy him, and after communicating with the other Indians I was invited to join them, and the whole party escorted me to the dwelling of Mucozo. I gave him the tortoise (which he at once recognised), and told him fully how it was that I sought his

protection. He received me most kindly, and assured me that he would be my friend. He kept his promise most faithfully, and as we grew in intimacy we became attached to each other like brothers. He was but a few years older than myself, and, though not robust, of graceful form and handsome countenance.

Ucita soon heard of the place where I had taken refuge, and several times sent messages to demand my surrender; but to this Mucozo would not consent. At length he sent another brother-in-law of Mucozo to mediate, with a view to my delivery up to him as the simplest way of avoiding hostilities. Mucozo was far less powerful than Ucita; but he did not hesitate about his decision. With every manifestation of indignation he rejected the proposal as dishonourable, and plainly told the ambassador that he would not violate the rights of hospitality, be the consequences what they might; nor would any consideration induce him to surrender the poor white fugitive to so cruel and unreasonable an enemy as Ucita. This bold answer was successful, and Ucita did not carry out his threats of making war on Mucozo. Good actions have their reward; and I lived to be mainly instrumental in making Mucozo the richest and most powerful chief in all this part of Florida.

Mucozo frequently spoke with me about the Spaniards, their exploits and their intentions; and I faithfully gave him every information and advice which I thought might be useful to him. I endeavoured to make him understand that I was not myself a Spaniard, but belonged to another nation of white men, who were also Christians; and this I did, the better to convince him of my impartiality and friendliness towards himself. In our many conversations on this subject, I quite persuaded him that his best policy was to make friends with the Spaniards; and that hostility to them would involve him in ruin and destruction, because of their immense superiority in arms, military knowledge, resources, and, above all, in their possession of horse soldiers. I persuaded him finally to open communications with the Spaniards. I myself had long desired to have news of the army, and I was particularly anxious about my cousin Henry, not knowing whether he might not have been killed in the battle when I was made prisoner.

I could learn nothing about what was going on whilst I was detained in the country of Ucita. I knew very well from the movements of the Indians, their going to and fro in large numbers, and the arrival of wounded men from time to time, that something was in progress; but all intelligence was carefully kept from me. In the village of Mucozo there was no such secrecy; but being out of the range of the Spanish operations, little intelligence reached us. We did learn in a vague way that the greater part of the Spanish army had marched inland from the sea, and that there had been much fighting; but beyond this I could gather nothing which appeared at all probable.

It was now more than six months since I had been absent from the army; four months of which I was Ucita's prisoner. I was now free, and perfectly restored to health and strength; and I thought it my duty, as it certainly was my inclination, to return to the army. I proposed to Mucozo to supply me with guards and an escort, and offered to communicate to the Spaniards his desire for peace and friendship with them. Mucozo, though loth to part from me, saw that my request to leave was reasonable and natural; and that for himself it was of great importance that he should make friends with the Spaniards. It was accordingly arranged that I should go, escorted by ten of the best warriors of Mucozo. As I took an affectionate leave of him he laid his hand on my shoulder, and, looking me kindly in the face, spoke as follows: "White brother, I gave you shelter when you were friendless and homeless, and Ucita sought your life. Rather than give you up, I chose to fall into disgrace with my relations and neighbours. Did I do this through hope of reward? No; there was no such hope. But now a time has come when you can show your friendship for me. Go to the great chief of this white army and tell him that what I have done for you I would have done for any of his people in distress. Beg him to believe in my friendly disposition, and my desire to be of service to him; and ask him not to lay waste the small territory of one who is not his enemy, and is willing to be his friend." This formal speech was in the Indian fashion, and embodied my instructions as the messenger of Mucozo. I assured him it should be faithfully delivered, and that the great white chief would certainly be rejoiced

to have him for a friend. I then took my departure with my escort.

We left at a good hour in the morning, and marched all day through the forest, sometimes having to cross small rivers and morasses. At night we camped in a clear space, lit fires, and partook of the food we had brought with us. The night passed quietly, and early in the morning we resumed our march. Towards sunset we came in sight of a body of Spanish cavalry riding over a green plain bordering the forest from which we were just issuing. No sooner did they catch sight of us than they came upon us at the charge, regardless of the cries of their leader to stop. The Indians fled back into the wood, all but one who kept by me in the open. This was a young man whom Mucozo had given me as a servant, and who had become very attached to me. His name was Choquo; and on this, as on many after occasions, he proved his fidelity and devotion. I stood my ground, supposing the Spaniards would recognise me; nor did I reflect that I was now, to all appearances, an Indian, almost indistinguishable from the rest. My skin was sunburnt, my arms painted, my head decorated with feathers, and I carried an Indian bow and quiver of arrows. One of the troopers, whom I recognised as a cavalier named Alvaro Nieto, rode at me with his lance; and but for the interposition of Choquo I should have been transfixed on the spot. The faithful Indian threw himself in front of the furious cavalier, and was knocked down by the horse; but the animal swerved from his course, and I was for the moment saved. Nieto, nevertheless, wheeled round and came at me again, while Choquo lay senseless on the ground. This time I parried the lance with my bow, at the same time leaping on one side to avoid the horse. All the time I kept crying out "Christiano, Christiano," and making the sign of the cross on my forehead when I could. I also called to Alvaro by his name; but so hot and excited was he that he kept on thrusting and riding at me for some time. When, at last, he came to understand who I was, he took me by the arm and helped me to mount to the croup, and rode off to the captain of the party (who proved to be Baltazar de Gallegos), comporting himself as if he had done something brave and meritorious.

It appeared that this party of cavaliers had set out that very morning in quest of me, intelligence having been obtained of my being with Mucozo. Gallegos at once gave orders for the recall of the troops, who were in the woods hunting down the poor Indians like so many wild beasts. I went with the messenger and called out to the Indians to come out, as they had nothing more to fear. Some were panic-stricken and fled homewards; but the rest I pacified by explaining that a mistake had been made. One Indian had been killed, and some others wounded, but not fatally. Choquo recovered from his state of insensibility, and was not much hurt. Three of the sound Indians I at once sent back to Mucozo with instructions to explain the unfortunate mistake to him, so that he might not, from the reports of the fugitive Indians, form erroneous opinions of the Spaniards or myself.

The night was far advanced when we reached the town where the Spaniards were quartered, and, in the darkness, another unfortunate mistake was likely to have occurred. This early return of Gallegos was not expected, and the noise of our approach in the dark caused the sentinels to give the alarm, taking us for enemies. The whole garrison turned out to attack us; but fortunately they came to understand who we were before any mischief was done. The rest of the night was spent in revelling, and in listening to the account of my adventures. My Indian friends I took care should be treated with all possible kindness; and in the morning they were sent back laden with presents, and with a message to Mucozo to come himself and visit the camp, for the Spanish commanders attached importance to his friendship.

CHAPTER VI.

The main army gone inland—Anasco's perilous ride back to the coast—The town to be evacuated—The news from the army—De Soto's difficulties—Treacherous designs of Vitachuco—The tables turned—His force attacked and dispersed—Magnanimity of De Soto—Fresh treachery—Murderous attack on the Spaniards—Danger of De Soto—Death of Vitachuco, and execution of prisoners.

I FOUND that De Soto had long since marched into the interior, and that a few days before my return, Juan de Anasco, after a most perilous ride, had come back from him, with orders for the evacuation of the town of Ucita. The caravel was to sail for Havañah with news of the expedition; and the two brigantines were to repair, with the more necessary stores, to the Bay of Aute, a commodious harbour to the west, which had recently been discovered. Anasco was to go with the brigantines, and some troops for the protection of the new depôt, and the rest of the force was to march inland after the Governor.

As to the news brought by Anasco, it was of a very exciting character. And first, as to himself, he had set out from headquarters with thirty lancers, picked men, and well mounted. They had ridden night and day as fast as they could, crossing rivers and swamps, and through forests, occasionally fighting natives, who, however, had not time to rally in large numbers. It took them nearly a fortnight to make the journey, and two of their number died from exposure and exhaustion on the way.

As to the Governor and the army, Anasco said they were in winter quarters at a town called Anhayca, in the country of the Apalachees—the most daring and warlike people yet encountered. In the course of their march to Anhayca they met with many difficulties from the moist and swampy nature of the country, and had had to overcome the fierce and protracted resistance of large bodies of the natives.

The whole country was raised against the Spaniards, and the Governor had completely failed in all his efforts to make friends with the caciques and their subjects. His worst experience was with a cacique named Vitachuco, whose territories were said to be fifty leagues across. This chief had for a time held aloof from the army; but partly by threats of wasting his country, and partly by presents and promises, he had been induced to visit the camp. Anasco described him as a tall and very powerful man, of high and proud spirit, and about thirty-five years of age. For several days he handsomely entertained the army in his chief village; then the Governor received sure information from a friendly Indian that Vitachuco meditated an act of deep treachery. He had selected several of his best warriors, and had ordered them to conceal their weapons in a thicket near the village, and appear at all times unarmed, so as to throw the Spaniards off their guard. On an appointed day it was arranged that the cacique should invite De Soto to a general muster of his subjects, drawn up in battle array, though without weapons, in order that he might see what a numerous force of Indian allies he had at his command for future conquests.

Trusting, from the good understanding existing between them, that the Governor would go forth carelessly and alone, a dozen of the most powerful Indians had received orders suddenly to seize and bear him into the midst of their warriors, who, assuming their arms, were to attack the Spaniards in their camp. Thus, between the surprise of the sudden assault and their dismay at the capture of their General, the cacique calculated upon an easy conquest.

The Governor consulted with his captains, and it was determined to seize Vitachuco in the manner he had planned to seize the Governor. For this purpose twelve of the stoutest warriors were selected to keep near the Governor when he should go forth to view the Indian army. At a certain signal they were to rush forward and make the cacique prisoner.

On the appointed day Vitachuco came to the Governor early in the morning, and with much humility and seeming veneration begged him to come and see the muster of his faithful allies. De Soto replied, with an unsuspicious air, that he should rejoice greatly to see their

numbers and witness their manœuvres; but in order to make the display more striking, and furnish the Indians likewise with a spectacle worth beholding, he would command a mock fight among his horse and foot soldiers for Vitachuco's entertainment. The cacique did not much relish this proposal; but, blinded by his passions, he agreed to the arrangement, trusting to the number and valour of his vassals to overthrow the Spaniards, however well prepared.

All things being arranged, the Spaniards marched out, horse and foot, in battle array, with glittering arms and fluttering banner. The Governor remained behind, to accompany the cacique on foot, in order the better to disguise his knowledge of the latent treason. He went, however, secretly armed, and ordered two of his finest horses to be led forth ready for service. Near the village was an extensive plain, bounded on one side by a forest and on the other by two lakes. Here the cacique formed his squadrons, with the lakes on their right; their bows and arrows concealed in the grass. They numbered several hundreds, and with their lofty plumes and military order made a magnificent display. The cacique and Governor appeared on foot, each accompanied by twelve men. The Spanish troops were to the right of the Governor, the infantry being drawn up near the forest, and the cavalry on the plain.

Between nine and ten o'clock in the morning, De Soto and Vitachuco arrived at the spot which the latter had fixed upon for the seizing of the Governor. Before the former, however, could make his preconcerted signal, a Spanish trumpet gave a warning blast. In an instant twelve Spaniards rushed upon the cacique. His attendants threw themselves before him, and endeavoured to repel the assailants, but in vain. He was borne off amid the shouts of his captors.

De Soto leaped, at the same moment, upon his favourite steed, and spurred among the thickest of the enemy, with that headlong valour which always distinguished him in battle. The Indians had already seized their weapons. Their front ranks were thrown into confusion by the impetuous charge of De Soto; but as he pressed forward, a shower of arrows came whistling round him. They were principally aimed at his horse, the Indians always seeking

to kill those animals in the first place, knowing their great importance in battle to the Spaniards. Four arrows wounded the animal in the legs, four pierced it in the chest, and it fell down dead. The Spanish troops, who, at the trumpet signal, had assailed the native squadrons, came at this critical moment to the aid of the General. He, springing upon his reserve horse, put himself at the head of the cavalry and dashed amongst the enemy. The latter having no proper weapons to resist the charge, broke, and fled in every direction. Those in the rear sought refuge in the forest; others threw themselves into one of the lakes, which was too large to be surrounded by our forces, and so escaped; others scattered themselves over the plain, where many of them were overtaken and slain by our horsemen, and some few made prisoners. But the best and bravest warriors, composing the enemy's vanguard, were unable either to reach the forest or the large lake, and had to seek refuge in the smaller one. Here they were in sore strait, for the Spaniards quickly surrounded this piece of water, and so had them, as it were, in a trap. The Spaniards shot at them at their leisure as they swam about, giving them no repose. Efforts were made to induce them to surrender; but neither promises nor threats, nor the prospect of death by drowning, or by arrows and shots from crossbows and arquebuses, had any effect. So obstinate were they that it was midnight before any surrendered, although they had been not less than fourteen hours in the water.

With great magnanimity the Governor refrained from punishing Vitachuco for such base treachery; but the prisoners, of whom there were many, were condemned to serve in chains as menials to the Spaniards as long as the army remained in that province. In this way every man in the army had one or more servants to wait on him. Vitachuco himself remained in some sort a prisoner in his own house, but was still treated with kindness and respect, and dined every day at the Governor's table. But rage and hatred rankled in his heart, and soon impelled him to the formation of another scheme for the destruction of the Spaniards, and the gratification of his revenge. His best and bravest warriors were in chains, dispersed amongst the Spaniards, and about equalling them in number. It was a part of their menial duty to attend upon their new masters

at their meals, and the cacique conceived that at such a moment it would be easy, by a preconcerted movement, for his subjects to strike a signal blow that should rid them at once of their oppressors.

Scarcely had Vitachuco conceived this desperate scheme, than he hastened to put it into operation. He had four young Indians who attended him as pages. These he sent to the principal prisoners, revealing his plan, with orders that they should pass it secretly from one to another, and hold themselves in readiness, at the appointed time, to carry it into effect. The dinner-hour of the third day was the time fixed upon for striking the blow. As Vitachuco would be dining with the Governor, and the Indians in general attending upon their respective masters, the cacique was to watch his opportunity, spring upon De Soto, and kill him; giving, at the moment of assault, a war-whoop that should resound throughout the village. This was to be the signal for every Indian in the place to grapple with his master, or any other Spaniard, and despatch him on the spot.

On the day fixed, Vitachuco dined as usual at the table of the Governor, who sought to win his friendship by the kindest attentions. When the repast was concluded, the chief stretched himself upon the bench on which he had been seated, and twisting his body from side to side, projected first one arm, then the other, to its full extent, clenching his fists, and drawing them up so that they rested on his shoulders; he then jerked out his arms two or three times, until every joint cracked like a snapped reed. In this way the Indians of Florida used to rally their strength when about to perform any extraordinary feat.

After this preparation, the cacique sprung upon his feet, closed instantly with the Governor, at whose side he had been sitting, seized him with his left hand by the collar, and with his right gave him such a furious blow in the face as to level him to the ground, the blood gushing out of his eyes, nose, and mouth, as if he had been struck with a club. The cacique threw himself upon his victim, to finish his work, at the same time giving the signal war-whoop so loudly, that it might have been heard for a quarter of a league.

All this was the work of an instant, and before the

officers present had time to recover from their astonishment, the Governor lay senseless beneath the tiger grasp of Vitachuco. One more blow from the savage would have been fatal; but ere he could deliver it, a dozen swords and lances were thrust through his body, and he fell dead.

The war-whoop of the cacique had been heard and obeyed by his subjects throughout the village. On hearing the signal, the Indians, who were attending upon their masters, assailed them with whatever weapon or missile they could command. Some seized upon pikes and swords, which they wielded with great skill; others snatched up the pots in which meat was stewing at the fire, and beating the Spaniards about their heads, bruised and scalded them at the same time; some caught up plates, pitchers, jars, and the pestles with which they pounded the maize; others, bones remaining from the repast; others seized upon stools, benches, and tables, striking with impotent fury when their weapons had not the power to harm. The greater number, however, armed themselves with burning firebrands, which seemed to have been provided for the purpose, and rushed like devils into the affray.

In this chance-medley fight many of the Spaniards were terribly burnt, bruised, and scalded; some had their arms broken; others were maimed by sticks and stones. My cousin Henry was violently assaulted by his slave, had some of his teeth knocked out, and would have been killed, but for the timely aid of a Spaniard, who sent a shaft from a crossbow, which pierced the Indian through the breast and killed him upon the spot.

It was fortunate for the Spaniards that most of the Indians were in chains, and none of them regularly armed, otherwise their assault would have been attended with great carnage. As it was, many of the Spaniards were more or less severely wounded, and four slain, before the savages could be overpowered.

Signal vengeance was then taken upon the prisoners. Some of the Spaniards were so exasperated at the wounds they had received, and at hearing of their Governor's maltreatment, that they wreaked their fury upon every Indian in their power. Others, who were cavaliers, thought it beneath their dignity to take away the lives of slaves. They brought their prisoners, therefore, to the grand square

of the village, and delivered them into the hands of the General's guard, who despatched them with their halberds.

In these conflicts, and subsequent executions, some hundreds of Indians were slain. The blow which the Governor had received from Vitachuco had been so violent, that it was half-an-hour before he recovered his senses. His face was bruised and disfigured, and several of his teeth were broken, so that for three weeks he could eat no solid food. He and his wounded soldiers were obliged to remain four days in the village before they were sufficiently recovered to travel.

Such was the account given to us by Anasco of one of the adventures of the army; and though the conflicts with Vitachuco were by far the most severe of any so far experienced, they were by no means the only occasions of serious hostile encounters with the natives.

CHAPTER VII.

Departure—Surplus stores—Mucozo's reward—On the march—Night attack—A strong shot—The great swamp and lake—Forced marches—Attacked by the Apalachees—Our ranks broken—Hand-to-hand fight—Fall of the Indian leader—A dear-bought victory—No rest for us—Our continued losses—False statement of Indians—De Soto comes to our aid—Reach headquarters.

FOR several days all was bustle and excitement with us at the town of Ucita, carrying out the orders for evacuation. The caravel was first made ready and sent off to Havañah. The two brigantines were next refitted, laden with necessary stores and materials, and, under the command of Juan de Anasco, sailed away along the western coast for the Bay of Aute. The rest of us—seventy horse and fifty foot—were to march inland on the track of the army, under the command of Pedro Calderon, to join the Governor in his winter quarters at Anhayca.

After everything had been arranged, there remained quantities of stores which we could not take with us—such as cassara bread, cloth and clothing, cuirasses, helmets, bucklers, lances and pikes, besides sea stores in great variety, and much unwrought steel and iron; the Governor having provided a profusion of everything for the expedition. What was to be done with these superfluous commodities became a question. There were no means of preserving them for our possible use in the future. To destroy them by fire, or by casting them into the sea, seemed a pity; but to leave them to be seized upon by Ucita after our departure was wholly out of the question. In this difficulty I suggested that they should be given to Mucozo, representing that his friendship towards the Spaniards was unquestionable, and that any advantages this accession of wealth would confer upon him would be advantages over our enemies. Before this, Mucozo had visited the camp,

and had remained the guest of the army for eight days, making an excellent impression. I was rejoiced to be able to receive him with proper hospitality, and to repay, to some extent, the services he had rendered me. I made him what presents I could out of my own effects, and gave into his charge a rosary and cross of ivory, which I begged him to have carefully conveyed to Aymay, with assurances of my unalterable love, and hopes for our meeting again at some future time.

It was decided with little hesitation that Mucozo should have the superfluous stores; and the friendly and humane cacique was astonished at hearing that he was at once to be made the sole owner of what to him was incalculable riches. By my advice he brought most of his people down to the harbour; and to me it was a pleasant sight, during the four remaining days of our stay, to see his Indians incessantly going to and fro, like armies of ants, bearing off the presents to his capital.

Everything being provided for, we set out on our march to join De Soto, leaving behind us the gardens and fields in full vegetation. At the earnest request of Mucozo, we first directed our march through his country, though it was not the direct route. On the evening of the second day's march we reached his village capital, so familiar to me, and were welcomed by him and his people with the most profuse hospitality. The next day, as our leader would not delay longer, Mucozo accompanied us on our march as far as his own frontier, and then took leave of us with many expressions of regret and renewed assurances of friendship. That evening we encamped near a forest. In the dead of the night the camp was suddenly attacked by a body of Indians. The Spaniards sprang to their arms, and the Indians were quickly put to flight and driven into the wood. No sooner, however, had we returned to the camp than the Indians were once more on our track, and in this manner they annoyed us all night long.

In one of those skirmishes an Indian, bolder than the rest, advanced far into the open, and gave me an opportunity (I being mounted) of cutting him off from the forest. Seeing that I must soon overtake him, he turned suddenly round, and fixing an arrow in his bow, discharged it at me with a good aim. The arrow struck the horse I was riding

in the chest, and almost at the same moment I ran the Indian through with my lance, so that all three—the Indian, myself, and the horse—rolled together on the ground. Both the Indian and the horse were mortally wounded, and died within a few minutes. It was thought at the time that this Indian must have been the leader of the attacking party, for after his death we were no more troubled that night. After daybreak I went to the place where the Indian lay dead, and, on closely examining his features, I recognised him as one of the chief warriors of Ucita; thus clearly proving that this relentless man was still pursuing his revenge against the Spaniards. The horse was the property of Gonzalo Silvester, who, being ill, had lent it to me for the occasion. It was a large and powerful animal, and much surprise was occasioned by its sudden death merely by an arrow; but on opening the body it was found that the shaft had passed through the breast, pierced the heart, and penetrated to the intestines, so great was the force by which it had been discharged.

Next morning we found the trail of the army, and pursued it to the margin of a great swamp with a great lake in the centre. There we remained for the night. It was at this place that De Soto had experienced most strenuous opposition from the Indians, and had suffered severe losses. Here also it was that the Indians had defeated Navarez ten years before, and driven him back towards the coast. We, however, escaped molestation, although from what Juan de Anasco had told us we fully expected to have to fight our way across the swamps and lake.

Having passed this dangerous place we made forced marches for several days, the mounted men changing places with the foot soldiers from time to time. We found abundant food in the abandoned villages, but saw no Indians, the whole country being as silent as if it were uninhabited. At length we reached the country of the formidable Apalachees, and came to a narrow pass in the forest. Hardly had we entered this when the Indians rushed upon us from all sides, with terrific yells and a shower of arrows. At the first discharge one of our horses was killed and five wounded, and ten of our men were also wounded. The suddenness of the attack, the restiveness of the horses, and the yells of the hordes of natives, produced

a scene of wild confusion which broke up our ranks. A formidable band of the enemy, led by a warrior with a large plume of feathers upon his head, but in other respects perfectly naked, bore down upon us with a great shout. I happened to be near Gonzalo Silvester, in this part of the field, and he shouted to me to shoot at the leading Indian, who was evidently the chief. For the better accomplishment of this purpose we both ran to the shelter of a large tree, but were perceived by the Indian, who divined our purpose. He discharged three arrows at us in rapid succession, and with unerring aim; but Silvester had picked up a thick quilted Indian garment which had become saturated with water. This he used as a defence, and it proved quite effectual in arresting the flight of the arrows. It was now my turn; and with a good aim and a strong pull I sent an arrow well home into the chest of the Indian. He staggered a few paces, and, shouting out something to his followers, was caught in their arms and borne from the field.

The combat was not less furious in other parts, and we began to lose ground. Only about fifty of our number could be brought into the fight, and our cavalry could render no service in the narrow spaces between the trees. The struggle with us was becoming one for life, and we fought desperately; but all of a sudden the ardour of the Indians appeared checked, and they began slowly to retreat, keeping up, however, a constant discharge of arrows. The news of their chief having been mortally wounded had spread amongst them, and discouraged them. Seeing these signs of faltering, we rallied, charged, and drove them off the field. But it was a dear-bought victory. There were few of us who were not wounded, though none mortally. We passed a restless and wakeful night, the wounded bemoaning their injuries, and anxiously listening to the dismal howlings of the Indians, who hovered around our encampment until dawn. The one lucky shot which laid low the Indian chief had probably saved us from entire destruction.

In the morning, having done all that was possible for the wounded, we resumed our march with a bold front, the Indians falling back before us and annoying us all the time by discharges of arrows, inflicting upon us several more wounds. In this way we marched for five leagues, and

came to an open country where we could use our cavalry. Here it was absolutely necessary to take some rest, for the sake of the wounded, and we accordingly entrenched ourselves as best we could. But as soon as night set in, the Indians were again upon us with dreadful yells. Our horsemen quickly turned out and chased them off; but all night long they repeated the same tactics, to our great annoyance.

Next morning we resumed our march, exposed to constant assaults wherever there were any woods. The Indians shouted to us repeatedly that they had already killed our chief and all his warriors, and would soon make an end of us, calling us murderers, robbers and vagabonds. During this day another horse was killed, and further wounds inflicted on men and animals. We had to go slowly, as well on account of the attack of the enemy as because of the number and state of our wounded, several of whom did not outlive their injuries. The statement of the Indians, that they had killed our chief and all his army, gave us some uneasiness, which was increased towards evening as we approached De Soto's headquarters and saw no signs of men or horses. We began to fear that the Indians had spoken truly; but on drawing nearer to Anhayca our anxiety was relieved by the pleasant sight of the Governor himself, riding towards us at the head of a strong force of horsemen. It appeared that he had come out to ascertain our fate, for the Indians had also alarmed him by shouting out that they had killed us all. He, like us, feared that this might be true, and with better reason than we, for he knew how desperately he had to fight his way, at the head of the main body of horse and foot, over the same ground which our little band of 120 men had to traverse. At Anhayca I was pleased to find my cousin Henry alive and well, being little the worse for all he had gone through. He was equally delighted to see me, having long since given me up for lost, supposing that I had been killed in the fight in the woods when we sought to capture Ucita.

CHAPTER VIII.

Safe at headquarters—Anasco's voyage round the coast, and ride from the Bay of Aute—Discovery of a fine harbour at Achusi—Message to Havañah for supplies, etc.—Rendezvous at Achusi for next year (1540)—Continued Indian attacks—Our heavy losses—A brave and cool Indian—We waste the country, and kill or enslave all natives—The gold question—General discontent—Grand conference—March to the north-east—A long and toilsome journey—Approaching the land of Cofachique—Wholesale slaughter of natives by our Indian allies—We get rid of them.

WE were now, to our great joy, safe at headquarters, comfortably lodged, and hospitably entertained by our comrades, who regarded us as heroes. Here we were made aware of the situation of affairs. We found that Juan de Anasco had arrived in camp before us, having safely made the voyage along the coast to Aute, and then ridden with a few troopers to Anhayca, to report to the Governor; who thereupon ordered Diego Maldonado to proceed to Aute, and, by means of the brigantines, explore the coast further to the west. This he had done, and had found a fine land-locked harbour, called Achusi, capable of accommodating a large fleet. This discovery greatly pleased the Governor, as it was the kind of seaport he most desired in view of his schemes of conquest and colonization, being conveniently situated for receiving reinforcements and supplies from Havañah. He accordingly despatched Maldonado once more to the harbour he had discovered, giving him directions to sail with the brigantine to Havañah, and to return with reinforcements and supplies of all kinds, by the month of October in the following year (1540); he himself proposing, in the meantime, to make a wide circuit through the interior of the country to explore the surrounding provinces.

In our winter quarters at Anhayca we had been incessantly harassed by the Indians, who lurked about day and

night in ambush, watching all our movements, and cutting off anyone who ventured to stray beyond a bowshot from the defences. They had learnt enough of our prowess to make them refrain from attacking squadrons of our men; but small foraging parties were repeatedly attacked, and individual stragglers were almost certain to be cut off. In this way they killed more than twenty soldiers, and several horses.

One day a foraging party of twenty horse and fifty foot soldiers surprised a solitary Indian, whom they desired to capture and enslave. The Indian fled with such fleetness of foot as to make it useless for the unmounted soldiers to attempt his pursuit, but he, seeing that some of the horsemen were gaining on him, turned at bay under a tree with low and wide-spreading branches. Diego de Soto, nephew of the Governor, galloped as close to the tree as he could, and thrust at the Indian with his lance. The Indian parried the thrust, and, in response, shot the horse dead with an arrow. Another cavalier dashed up to the rescue, and again the horse was tumbled over dead by a well-aimed shaft. The two cavaliers then rushed upon the Indian, who made off just at sufficient speed to keep a little ahead of them, all the time taunting them with words and signs. Having amused himself in this way, he disappeared in a thicket, leaving the cavaliers furious at the loss of their horses, and the ridiculous position in which they had been placed.

There was no possibility of making peace with those people, and accordingly the Spaniards showed them no mercy, but treated them with all the rigours of war. Their deserted villages were destroyed, and the country wasted far and wide. Nearly all the natives who fell into the hands of the Spaniards were put to death; but some were put in chains and kept as servants, being treated with great severity. The country around was very fertile and populous; great fields of maize, pumpkins, cucumbers, and other produce, extended as far as the eye could reach. A species of wild plum grew in great abundance, and the rivers abounded in fish, which the natives were in the habit of drying for winter use.

The Governor was highly pleased at my return with a knowledge of the Indian tongue, which he judged would be

of the greatest service to him. He at once put it to the test by causing me to question the captive Indians on the subject of gold and silver. I found, however, that the dialect in this part of Florida was different from that of the parts nearer the sea; but I was, nevertheless, able to make myself understood by the Indians here, and understand them in my turn. I soon discovered that they did not fully realise the nature of our desire for information respecting mines or deposits of the precious metals, though gold and silver pieces, and stones set in rings of those metals, were shown them. However, it seemed to be the meaning of the natives who were interrogated, that there was abundance of those metals, and also pearls, in a country far to the north, which they called Cofachique.

So far, De Soto's ambition of rivalling the conquerors of Mexico and Peru, by finding wealthy native empires and rich mines of gold and silver, had been bitterly disappointed. He had met, instead, enemies far more difficult to cope with than Cortes or Pizarro had ever encountered, though our forces were superior to any commanded by those conquerors in the earlier portions of their careers. Nine months of terrible toil and hard fighting had brought him no nearer to the realization of his hopes, and some of the army began to think that what they had seen of this country represented its true state throughout, and that it contained no kingdoms like Mexico or Peru. Others were unwilling to share in this gloomy belief, and chiefly because they had engaged their whole fortunes in the enterprise, and could only hope to repay themselves by important conquest and rich plunder, failing which they would have to return home broken, penniless men. In this respect De Soto was as deeply compromised as anyone, for he had spent, and was spending, enormous sums of money on the expedition. To discover abundance of treasures was a main and common object; but De Soto, up to this time, was careful to have it understood that also an important object with him was to subdue and colonize a fertile country, and derive therefrom a revenue which would in time justify the great sacrifices he had made, even if no mineral treasures were discovered. The commission of the Emperor, as well as appointing him for life Adelantado of Florida, also authorised him to select for himself an estate thirty leagues in length and fifteen in

breadth, in any part of the country he pleased. Now that the nature of the country had been disclosed, it was plain enough that the more moderate object of De Soto was quite attainable, and that with little difficulty he could establish a great and prosperous dominion as viceroy of the Emperor, map out for himself a rich private estate, and bestow fine inheritances upon such of his followers as chose to settle down in Florida. Many of these, however, being young and ambitious men, had no inclination to fix themselves as colonial landowners, but rather desired to find a shorter way to riches and power.

All these questions were discussed at a grand conference of the army in the spring of 1540, and it was finally resolved that further efforts should be made to discover rich territories before the colonization plan should be acted upon. Accordingly in the month of March, 1540, De Soto broke up his winter cantonment at Anhayca, and the army set out to the north-east in quest of the land of Cofachique. During the severe winter most of the Indians that had been enslaved and put to menial work had perished through being exposed, naked and in chains, to the inclemency of the season, and through harsh usage, so that now, with few exceptions, the soldiers had to carry their own requisites and do the menial work. To the last, as from the first, the dauntless Apalachees pursued us with relentless animosity, and before we crossed their frontiers killed six more of our men and wounded a number of others. In all, the army lost nigh upon thirty men, and several horses, during the five months of its stay in Anhayca.

Beyond the Apalachee country we came upon tribes who, on the whole, were more civilized, and certainly better disposed towards friendship and peace. The houses were larger, and thatched with reeds instead of straw. They were all very clean and bright, within and without, the walls being smoothly plastered inside and out with a kind of whitish clay. They had special cooking places or kitchens, for preparing food and baking bread or cakes; also spacious and airy lofts in the roofs, with floors of cane or reeds, which they called "barbacos." Those barbacos they used for storing corn, dried fruits, and other things. The houses of the chiefs and lords had covered galleries in front, furnished with benches of cane upon which to sit or

lie; also numerous barbacos for the storing of tribute goods, such as maize, skins, and mantles. The Indians are very skilful in dressing and dyeing the various kinds of skins which the men use for clothing the lower parts of the body. Their mantles are also dyed in a great variety of bright colours. They are mostly made of the fine inner bark of certain trees, and the fibres of a kind of strong grass, beaten and prepared like our flax. Some coats are made of cotton, and mostly quilted. The women wear one mantle from the waist downwards, and another they carry over the shoulders, leaving uncovered the right arm.

In those parts we had no stint of maize and other vegetable foods, nor was there any lack of flesh meats—chiefly deer and a kind of rabbit—for which we were thankful. Next to the want of salt, from which we had long suffered, flesh food was our great need. The inhabitants of Florida have no domestic cattle, and though game is generally abundant, the natives only kill what they immediately want, having no means of curing the flesh. We heard that to the north and west much use was made of the flesh of a species of wild buffalo, great herds of which wander over the plains in those regions. This explained why we frequently came across mantles or cloaks made of very thick and hairy ox-hides—a thing we could not at first understand, in the absence of all cattle, wild or domestic.

As we continued to march northward, we came to the territories of a powerful cacique, who showed us great friendship, and willingly promised to supply us with guides to Cofachique, and also provisions. He sent us a needlessly strong force of Indians as an escort, headed by a chief called Patofa. The Governor suspected treachery, and kept the army well on its guard; but though, as it turned out, the Indians had private designs of their own in sending such a large force with us, they meant no treachery so far as we were concerned. Their cacique was in a state of perpetual hostility, if not warfare, with the natives of regions through which we should have to pass on our way to Cofachique, and his real object was not so much to assist us, as to make use of our presence to avenge himself on those hereditary enemies of his. However, Patofa and his warriors behaved very well to us, and when we had wandered into wildernesses where food ran so short that several

of the swine had to be killed and eaten, our Indian allies freely stinted themselves, and gave us all the food they could spare.

After many weeks of toilsome wandering, and much suffering, we came at last to the borders of a rich country, studded with villages and hamlets, surrounded with far-stretching cornfields. We encamped for the night in view of this welcome land, Patofa and his Indians encamping (as was usual) a little distance from us. But in the middle of the night those allies of ours came stealthily from their camp, entered into the fertile country, and sacked and pillaged all the villages they could reach, slaughtering the natives of every age, and taking their scalps to show their cacique. Those ravages they continued during seven days, to the great disgust and embarrassment of the Governor, who found it impossible to restrain them. He at last decided to get rid of those inconvenient friends; so sending for Patofa, he thanked him for his services to the army, and dismissed him and his followers with many presents of knives, trinkets, and clothing. Two days after this we recommenced our march along the banks of a great river. During that time we met with no living thing, but witnessed many dismal and dreadful proofs of the ravages of Patofa. For many miles the ground was strewn with the scalpless corpses of men, women, and children, and with the burnt remains of houses. Such of the natives as had escaped the slaughter had fled far away, and we could find none of them to trust us, as they doubtless thought we were in league with their Indian enemies. But we were fortunately successful in coming upon some of their stores of corn, from which we abundantly supplied our necessities, then very great both with men and horses.

CHAPTER IX.

Arrival in Cofachique—State reception of the Princess—Aymay in her train!—Display of pearls—The army quartered—A message from Aymay—Interview—Ucita's designs frustrated—Tuscaluza's plans—I communicate with the Governor—Aymay to go with the army—Her religious instruction.

ON the afternoon of the third day the army halted in a verdant region, covered with mulberry, walnut, and other trees laden with fruit. On the fourth day we came within sight of a town on the other side of a river. In a little time six Indians of fine appearance were paddled across to us in a large canoe. The Governor received them with much courtesy, and assured them that his intentions were friendly, and he only desired a free passage and food supplies. He learned from them that their country was governed by a princess, who would probably be willing to grant them a free passage; but as for supplies, they were at present small, owing to a pestilence the year before, which had carried off a great number of people, and caused the cultivation of the land to be neglected. At the close of the interview they returned to the other bank of the river, and shortly we saw a litter brought down to the waterside. From this the female cacique alighted, and embarked in a highly decorated canoe. A kind of aquatic procession was then formed. First came a grand canoe of many paddles, containing the six ambassadors, and drawing after it the state barge of the princess, who reclined on skins and cushions in the stern, under a canopy supported by a lance. She was accompanied by eight female attendants. A number of canoes, filled with warriors, closed the procession.

As the young princess stepped ashore, and approached the place where De Soto stood ready to receive her, all were loud in their praises of her beauty, grace, and dignity.

I stood close to the Governor, prepared to act as interpreter, but had little opportunity to share in the general admiration, for as the princess and her train came nearer, what was my astonishment at seeing amongst her attendant damsels my own beloved Aymay, the daughter of the cacique Ucita, who I supposed to be hundreds of miles away! A cry of surprise and pleasure burst from me, and I was about to rush forward, but a private sign from Aymay checked the impulse. I judged that, for some reason, she did not wish me to recognise her openly on that occasion; and fortunately my exclamation was not noticed amid the expressions of admiration which greeted the arrival of the princess. For a moment or two I was confused and bewildered; for it came into my mind that I ought not to leave the Governor uninformed of the fact which had been so unexpectedly disclosed, and which might be of importance for him to know. On the other hand, the wish which Aymay had intimated was entitled to my fullest respect, and I could not tell of what importance it might be to her. I determined, therefore, to do nothing for the moment; for I judged the fact of Aymay's presence could not be a matter of immediate importance to the army, nor the necessity of disclosing it very urgent. My decision to say nothing about it for the time being was also, in a measure, enforced upon me by the necessity I was under of at once attending to my duties as an interpreter between the Governor and the princess.

The latter, having made her obeisance, seated herself on a kind of stool of state, placed for her by her attendants, and entered into conversation with the Governor. All she said was in conformity with the previous assurances of her ambassadors. Her country had been swept by a pestilence during the previous year, and supplies were scarce; but she offered to share with us a quantity of maize which had been collected in the village for the maintenance of the people. She proposed also to furnish us with guides to enable us to procure further supplies of food from other villages and districts. Meanwhile she very willingly made offer of her own house for the Governor's accommodation, and half of the village for that of his officers and principal soldiers, undertaking that wigwams of bark and branches should be put up for the rest. She added, that rafts and

canoes should be provided for the army to cross the river on the following day. De Soto, being extremely gratified by her generosity, endeavoured, in the best manner he could, to express his sense of her kind and hospitable offers; assuring her, through me, of the constant friendship of his sovereign and himself. The cavaliers, too, listening with admiring attention to her discourse, and the answers she gave to various inquiries concerning her province, were as much charmed with her intelligence and judgment as they had been with her beauty. They were surprised to find such natural dignity, grace, and true politeness in a person brought up in a wilderness.

While the Princess of Cofachique was conversing with the Governor, she was slowly disengaging a string of large pearls, which passed three times round her neck, and descended to her waist. The conference ended, she requested the Governor to accept the string of pearls, which she placed upon his neck. De Soto, having expressed his acknowledgments, took from his finger a valuable ring of gold, set with a fine ruby, and begged her acceptance of it. She received it very respectfully, and, placing it on one of her fingers, returned as she had come.

On the following day the army crossed the river by means of rafts and canoes, and found excellent quarters in the village, there being plenty of vacant houses, owing to the pestilence of the previous year. I was assigned quarters in the Governor's house, so as to be near him whenever he required my assistance in conversing with the natives. I had seen Aymay in the suite of the princess two or three times during the two days, but, as yet, had been afforded no opportunity of speaking with her. I resolved to wait as patiently as I could, and in no way compromise her by any indiscretion on my part. I felt sure, from her manner and looks, that she was only waiting for the first fair opportunity of an interview. In this I was right; for on the evening of the day of our instalment in our new quarters, an old Indian woman came to me when I was alone, and showing me one of the ivory rosary beads I had sent to Aymay, announced herself as her messenger. The token was sufficient proof and credential; and I readily accepted Aymay's appointment to meet her

that night, two hours after sunset, at a point on the bank of the river where a small stream fell into it.

As the hour drew near, I armed myself with bow and arrow and a hunting-knife, as if my intentions were to go in quest of game; but in reality I deemed it unadvisable to go to the lonely place of meeting without having some means of defence, in case of anything happening of an unexpected nature. I passed carelessly and unnoticed through the village and along the river's bank, but exercised caution and circumspection in approaching the meeting-place. I found my beloved one waiting for me beneath a spreading oak. I pass over the raptures of our first embrace, after so long a separation. She told me all that had taken place since then—how she had heard indirectly from her uncle, Mucozo, of my safe arrival in his territory, of my residence there, of my rejoining the white men, of her joy at receiving the presents I had sent her, and her sorrow at the news of my departure, fearing we should never meet again. I was glad to learn she and her mother and sister were not troubled on account of my escape; Ucita and the Indian lords thinking that I had got away without assistance. On my part, I told Aymay of all that had happened to me since I rejoined the army; and in return she gave me an account of the causes of her being in this part of the country, so far away from home. She told me that her marriage with Tuscaluza had been fully arranged and settled before he took his departure for his own country, whither he had gone for the better furtherance of the native schemes for resisting and destroying the Spaniards. Meanwhile her father, Ucita, was to hang on the rear of the army in order to watch and report upon its movements, and to take opportunities of inciting native hostilities against the Spaniards. After being away for many weeks on this duty, and just at the beginning of winter, messengers came from him with the news that he was staying in the country of the Princess Cofachique, who was a near relation of Aymay's mother. From hence it was his purpose to proceed to the south-west to join Tuscaluza in his own country, and arrange for further operations against the Spaniards at the beginning of spring. He sent orders for Aymay to join him in Cofachique in order to accompany him to Tuscaluza and

become his wife, as had been previously arranged. She had accordingly set out with an escort, and had reached Cofachique by an easier and shorter route than that taken by the army. By the princess, her cousin, she had been most kindly received, and to her she confided her great dislike for the marriage with Tuscaluza, and told her the whole story of her acquaintance with me, imploring protection against her father. She succeeded in winning the sympathy of the strong-minded princess, who took occasion to inform Ucita that his daughter should not be taken by force from her protection. Great was the anger of Ucita; but he could do nothing contrary to the will of the princess in her own dominions. In the end he had to proceed on his journey to Tuscaluza without his daughter. Such was the account given me by Aymay.

During our interview and her narrative I was troubled in my mind as to the course I had to pursue towards the Governor. I felt that I ought to let him know what I had heard about Ucita and Tuscaluza, and I did not see that either the princess or Aymay would be in any way compromised by the disclosure. This view I communicated to her, and asked her concurrence in it. She was willing to give it, providing I got the princess to consent also. This condition being reasonable, it was arranged that Aymay should speak to the princess on the subject without delay.

Next day the same old Indian who had brought me Aymay's message came to me and gave me to understand that I was free to make the state of the case known to the Governor. I at once waited upon him, and told him the whole story without reserve, excusing myself, as best I could, for not having disclosed it earlier. He was much interested in my narrative, and very willing to pardon me for my reticence, which he admitted to be natural under the circumstances. The same day he had a private conference with the princess and Aymay, at which I was of course present. The whole matter was fully discussed. The hostile designs of Tuscaluza and the Indians were no news to the Governor, and the information in no way affected his plans. His experience had taught him what to expect; and in the future, as in the past, he knew he must be prepared to encounter the strongest opposition from the natives. But in regard to Aymay and myself he specially

interested himself. His generous nature prompted him to favour our love affair, but his judgment suggested many difficulties. As a good Christian he could not countenance the union of one of his followers with a pagan woman, nor could he permit her to accompany the army in any equivocal character. On the other hand, he agreed with me that to leave her behind would be to abandon her wholly, and to place her, sooner or later, at the mercy of her father and the fierce Tuscaluza.

After a great deal of time had been given to the consideration of those difficulties, a decision was arrived at agreeable to all interested. It was settled with the princess that, when the army resumed its march, she, with Aymay in her train, should accompany it to the confines of her territory, and that in the meantime advantage should be taken of the interval to instruct Aymay in religious matters, so as to qualify her for Christian baptism. To this course the Governor was inclined, as well from feelings of personal kindness towards us, as because of the great service Aymay would be able to render the army, conjointly with myself, in intercourses with the natives. So the matter was settled, to the great contentment of all concerned.

From that very day the religious instruction of Aymay began. For the purpose she was placed in the hands of Father Juan de Gallegos, brother of one of our most distinguished captains, I rendering assistance as interpreter. Aymay was very willing to be converted; and not only in doctrinal matters, but in the Spanish language as well, she became very advanced before the army resumed its march.

CHAPTER X.

The province of Cofachique and its people—Inquiries about gold—Disappointment—Vast stores of pearls—Astonishing discovery of European reliques—Establishment of a Colony mooted—Broils with the natives—Departure—The Princess and Aymay accompany us—To the north-west—A miserable land and people—Strange disappearance of the Princess and Aymay—An expedition for gold—Another disappointment—Large pearls—How obtained—March to Cosa—Friendly reception—A prosperous country—A soldier deserts—Want of salt—Longing to reach the sea.

THE country or province of Cofachique is populous and very fertile, and the land well cultivated. In all respects the people are more civilized than any other Indians of Florida, and appear to be of a somewhat different race, as they themselves pretend. In complexion they are lighter than other Indians, and are tall and well formed in body and limbs. In character they are gentle, frank and sincere, and more inclined to peace than any natives we had theretofore met with. But they are not wanting in courage, and at the time of our coming they were carrying on a vigorous and successful war against some neighbouring states. They had amongst them many captives taken in the course of their wars, and these they put to tilling the ground, or employed them in domestic labour. To prevent their escape they had crippled them by cutting through the sinews of one leg above the heel, or at the instep. This is a cruel thing to do, but not worse than the like barbarities practised by the ancient Greeks on their captives, and by other nations, to be read of in histories. In truth, the Spaniards themselves of this day have an evil reputation enough for cruelty to slaves.

As we had come to Cofachique on report of gold to be found there, the Governor lost no time in seeking to find out what was known by the princess or her subjects about

the matter. I took up the inquiry by his direction; but I had some trouble in explaining what was desired, not knowing the exact Indian names for the precious metals; nor could Aymay help much. However, by showing pieces of gold and silver money, rings, and jewels, the princess came at last to have some understanding of what was wanted. To the great contentment of the Governor, she said she could find him plenty of the yellow and the white metals. And, truly, in a little while thereafter she sent to him several Indians laden with supposed treasures; but what was his mortification to find that the yellow metal produced to him was nothing else but a kind of bright-coloured natural copper, not unlike gold; while the supposed silver was a light and scaly substance, which crumbled into flakes in the hand, and did not seem to be metal at all, or of any kind! Thus quickly vanished the golden treasures of Cofachique, of which we had heard so much, and upon which we had so greatly relied, and come so far to seek with infinite labour and sufferings.

To console our manifest disappointment, the princess pointed out a kind of temple-sepulchre at one end of the village, telling us it was a place where the dead princes and great people of that nation were entombed, and that within were great quantities of pearls, to which we could help ourselves. She further spoke of another village called Talomeco, the former capital of the country, about a league distant, where there was a similar temple, only larger and richer, which contained the bodies of her forefathers, together with vast quantities of pearls and stores of other valuable things.

Thither the Governor repaired with the officers of the royal revenue, and several captains and soldiers, I amongst others. The temple was about a hundred paces long and forty wide, with a high roof of reeds. By the door were giant figures of wood, carved with some skill, the largest twelve feet high. They were in the likeness of Indian warriors, grim of visage, and of threatening aspect, and armed with various weapons. Inside there were similar figures of different sizes, and all around the walls many quaint carvings and curious sea and river shells. In this place also were a number of wooden couches and benches, on which stood boxes or chests, not unskilfully wrought,

and in these were the bodies of the dead princes, left to natural decay as in a charnel-house. Beside the chests were baskets of cane, some filled with furs, and skin robes, and mantles of the kind I have already described, that is, made of the inner rind and bark of trees, and of a kind of grass like flax; also garments made mostly of coloured feathers, like some still worn by the natives of those parts. But above all there were many baskets full of pearls of every size and in incredible quantities, together with pearl images of children, and birds, and other creatures. The contador, or intendant of the royal revenue, would have made general spoil of those articles but for the interference of De Soto, who represented that they were at present exploring the country, not dividing it and sharing its spoils, and that it would not be advisable to burthen themselves with treasures at present. They should, therefore, only take specimens of those riches to send to Havañah, and leave the rest in their present state until they commenced to colonize the country, when a fair division should be made, after one-fifth had been set apart for the crown. He distributed handfuls of large pearls among his officers, exhorting them to make rosaries of them; and he permitted the representatives of the crown to retain what they had already weighed out.

Close by the principal sepulchre were several buildings which served as armouries, and contained stores of weapons of all kinds, arranged in the best order. While ransacking those places we found a dagger and several coats of mail of European make, and were naturally astonished at meeting with such reliques in the heart of this unexplored country. Questioned on the subject, the Indians informed us that those things came from a seaside place, about two days' journey from thence, where many years before a number of white men had perished. Their commander had died soon after their landing at the place, and they quarrelled and fought amongst each other as to who should take his place. In this way many of them were killed; others died of sickness, and the few that remained re-embarked in their ship and went away. Pondering over those statements, the Spaniards concluded that those white men could be none other than those of the unfortunate expedition of De Ayllon. The account of the Indians agreed in all

particulars with what was known of the fate of the expedition. But certainly the sea could not be so near as the Indians seemed to say; and, on closer inquiry and strict computation, the Governor considered that the distance of Cofachique from the sea must be five or six days' journey, not two, due east, and that the sea must be the Atlantic.

Pleased with the riches and fertility of this province, and the amiability of the natives, many of the officers besought the Governor to fix a colony there, urging that a lucrative pearl fishery could be carried on, and a prosperous trade established with Spain, either by sea or by the river. De Soto, however, persisted in his design of first completing his exploration of the country, and then meeting Maldonado at Achusi. He pointed out that the country in its present state would not afford provisions for another month; that they could always return if they found no richer country; and that, meanwhile, the Indians would sow their lands with maize in greater plenty.

During our long stay in this place our men became somewhat demoralized, and broils began to break out between them and the natives. These were mainly due to the ill-conduct—the rapacity and licentiousness—of the baser minded amongst us. It was manifest that our further delay in the place would end in open hostilities and bloodshed. The army was now restored to full health, having been all the time well fed on corn and meat, and well clad with dressed skins and mantles. There was, therefore, no need for further delay, and the rapid growth of ill-feeling made it advisable to move. To prevent matters from growing worse, De Soto hastened his departure, and signified to the princess to be ready to accompany him with her attendants and guides, who could lead the army in the direction he intended to take. He assigned her a guard of honour, the command of which he conferred upon me, and gave directions that she should be treated with all the respect due to her rank. He also issued stringent orders against any further misconduct by the Spaniards, and showed himself so severe and stern in punishing some who ventured to disregard them, that all brawls between our people and the natives soon ceased completely.

It was on the 3rd of May, 1540, that we set forth on

our march in a north-westerly direction. At the end of a fortnight we halted for a few days' rest in a very barren country, the inhabitants of which were a feeble and peaceable people, who went nearly naked, and lived in a miserable way on herbs, and roots, and wild hens, which they shot with arrows. This, and a much more fertile province adjoining, were under the dominion of the princess.

During our few days' rest in this place a strange event, and one peculiarly afflicting for me, happened. This was nothing less than the disappearance of the princess and all her attendants in the middle of the night. They were lodged in a number of huts, a little way from our encampment, one of which was occupied by the princess and Aymay. No great precautions were taken, but at night a guard was commonly set of two or three of our men, more as a matter of ceremony than from any idea of the necessity for protection, as there was no reason to suppose that hostile Indians were in our vicinity. One night this duty was assigned to two negroes and a Barbary Moor, who were servants or slaves in the army, but also efficient as soldiers. In the morning the whole party had disappeared —the guard and the guarded—leaving no trace behind. The princess had brought with her a small reed box filled with large unpierced pearls, of great beauty and value, which she had intended as a present for Aymay when she parted with her. This also was gone. There were no traces of a struggle at the spot, though there were some doubtful indications of a number of Indians having been about the place during the night. The nature of the ground, which was barren and stony in the locality, did not, however, permit of any certainty on this point. When the matter was reported to the General, he caused every inquiry and search to be made. The guides and male attendants of the princess were questioned, but they appeared honestly unable to account for what had happened. Horsemen were sent out to scour the country around, but they brought back no intelligence. Opinions differed as to the explanation of this mysterious disappearance. Some thought that the flight of the princess was voluntary, and gave as reasons for that view that she had reluctantly accompanied the Spaniards to the confines of her dominions, and feared that they might insist upon her going still

further with them, and to escape this had fled back to her home. She might have persuaded the negroes and the Moor to favour and aid her flight, by promises of liberty and reward. This would be consistent with the absence of any signs of a struggle, which must inevitably have taken place if the case had been one of forcible abduction. Others thought that the hostile Indians had, in their stealthy way, succeeded in sweeping off the whole party, guards and all, without causing an alarm, and without leaving traces of violence. The princess had been treated with every kindness and consideration; no open constraint had been put upon her, and she could not reasonably suppose that the Spaniards would see any advantage in forcing her to accompany them beyond the confines of her own dominions, where alone she had influence. Nevertheless, the former view was finally adopted by the Governor, though the conviction clung to me that the elopement was forcible, and was in some way the work of Tuscaluza and Ucita. But no efforts had been spared to trace the fugitives, and with a heavy heart I acknowledged to myself that Aymay was again lost to me, and perhaps for ever. Still, I cherished a wild hope that I might meet with her once more. I felt confident and assured that she would never voluntarily abandon me, and that whatever might have been the circumstances of her disappearance I should surely hear from her again, if communication were possible. I felt that the further advance of the army into the wilderness would lessen the chances of hearing from her; but I did not despair in the providence of God, and in my prayers I besought the blessed saints to protect her and assist her in her desire to become one of the faithful. This was all that could be done for the time being. So we resumed our march, and for five days struggled through a rugged mountainous wilderness, with much toil and suffering. Gold, gold! was still our real quest, and constant thought. In one village where we made a short stay, the cacique informed the Governor that some thirty miles to the north, in a wild mountainous country, there were mines of copper, and of another metal which, from his description, might be gold. De Soto at once sent off an expedition, which returned in ten days with no better news than that the supposed gold was only the same sort of fine yellow copper we had met

with in Cofachique. While waiting for the return of the expedition we collected from the natives a number of large pearls, which, but for being spoilt in boring, would have been of immense value. The natives get the pearls by collecting oysters from the river and spreading them out on hot embers, which likewise tended to injure them by fire and smoke.

On the return of the expedition from the copper mines, the army once more started, this time directing its march towards a great province called Cosa, the borders of which were reached in a few days, though a march of a hundred leagues lay before us ere we reached the chief town in which the cacique resided. Arrived there at length, he received us kindly, and supplied us liberally with all we required. He was a young man of about twenty-six years of age, of a fine person and noble countenance, and attended by a train of a thousand warriors, tall and well formed, as were generally the people of this country. His followers were in their finest array, adorned with long plumes of different colours, and wearing mantles composed of various furs and skins, many of them martens, scented with musk. Being marshalled in squadrons, with their gay plumes waving in the breeze, they made a brilliant spectacle.

The village was situated on the banks of a river, amidst green and beautiful meadows, irrigated by numerous small streams. The country round was populous and fruitful; the houses were well stored with maize and a small kind of bean, and fields of Indian corn extended from village to village. There were plums of various kinds; some like those of Spain, others peculiar to the country. Vines clambered to the very tops of the trees which overhung the river. There were others in the fields, with low stocks, which produced large sweet grapes.

The village contained five hundred dwellings, and as they were very spacious, the captains and soldiers were all well accommodated. De Soto was quartered in the residence of the cacique.

During our stay in this village, a soldier of dissolute character having deserted, concealed himself among the natives, and was nowhere to be found. A negro, also, being too infirm to travel, was left in charge of the cacique.

On August 24th we departed from Cosa, though the cacique strongly urged us to settle permanently in his country, or, at least, stay over the winter. But the Governor declined for the present, at any rate, to do either, as he was anxious to keep his appointment to meet Maldonado, at the Bay of Achusi, in October.

Our hopes of finding rich mines and treasures of gold, or wealthy native states, were by this time almost abandoned, except by the more sanguine and least reasonable of the army. This, together with the fatigues and sufferings we had endured, and were daily enduring, made us long for the time when we should safely reach Achusi and enjoy rest and plenty, whatever might afterwards happen. In particular did we suffer, and that very terribly, from want of salt with our food, for in this part of the country there is none to be had. This constant want engendered with us a kind of putrid fever, which in one year had carried off sixty of our people. The Indians made a sort of lye from the ashes of certain herbs, and by using this with our food the fever was prevented, though it did not cure the disease when once taken.

CHAPTER XI.

Departure from Cosa—Reception by Tuscaluza—His haughty bearing—Two soldiers missing—March to Movill—Advance to Movill of part of the army—The fortifications—Treachery suspected—Attack upon, and retreat of the Spaniards—Battle outside the town—Storming the town—Fighting in the streets—Firing the houses.

THOUGH Cosa was a good country to colonize, it gave no satisfaction to our quest for gold. The Governor—still hoping to find a land rich in gold, as the easiest road to fortune—remained firm in his resolve to search diligently for such a country before settling down as a colonizer. He therefore determined to sweep round towards the south-west in a great circuit, terminating at Achusi. The course of our march, he was well aware, would take us through the country of the powerful and hostile Tuscaluza, but to this the Governor did not object. On the contrary, he rather desired to come to some sort of an issue with this redoubtable chief, who appeared to be the very heart and soul of most of the opposition the army had encountered from the natives. "For," said he, in talking upon this subject with me, "I do not despair of making him our friend by kind and generous treatment, and by letting him see how much he has to gain or lose, according to his relations with us. And if he should resist all my friendly advances, and remain implacable, I shall be free to treat him as an enemy, and I shall certainly destroy him completely, and with him the power and the influence he would use against us. As a friend, he would be of immense advantage to us in our settlement in this country; as an enemy, he must be overthrown as soon and completely as possible."

In this frame of mind the Governor advanced with the army into the territories of Tuscaluza, first sending certain Indian messengers in advance to announce his coming and assure the chief of his pacific disposition. Thus forewarned

of our approach, Tuscaluza made some preparations to receive us in state. We found him posted on the crest of a hill, which commanded a wide view over a rich and beautiful valley. He was seated on a kind of stool—concave, but without back or arms – similar to the stools used on state occasions by all the caciques of the country. Around him stood a hundred of his principal warriors, dressed in rich mantles and decorated with plumes. Beside him was his standard bearer, who bore aloft, on the end of a lance, a dressed deer skin, stretched out to the size of a buckler, yellow of colour and crossed by three blue stripes. This was the great banner of this warrior chieftain, and was the only military standard we met with throughout the whole of our march.

Tuscaluza received the Governor with dignified but somewhat haughty courtesy. Of myself, who attended the Governor as interpreter, he deigned to take no personal notice whatever, nor did he condescend to make the slightest reference to having seen me before, when a prisoner in the hands of Ucita. I confess that I felt somewhat abashed and humiliated in the presence of this haughty prince, my rival for the hand of Aymay, knowing or feeling certain that he was quite aware of my pretensions and must regard me with feelings of hatred, and probably contempt. However, I discharged my duties as interpreter with as much boldness as I could muster, under the fierce looks of this formidable chief.

For two days the army rested at this place, being well entertained during that time in accordance with the directions of Tuscaluza. The march was then resumed in the direction of a town bearing the same name as that of the chief. It was the design of the Governor to detain Tuscaluza in our company until some definite settlement was come to with him; but so far he seemed very willing to be with us, he and his warriors taking very curious notice of all our military movements and methods, of our arms and equipment, and particularly our horses. The Governor had steadfastly endeavoured to impress him with our superiority in military strength and resources, and had, at the same time, sought to conciliate him by kind and courteous treatment. On setting forth, the chief expressed a desire to ride on horseback, and the Governor was very willing to

gratify his desire. But it was difficult to find a horse sufficiently large and strong to accommodate him; and when at length a great pack-horse was chosen, his feet nearly touched the ground as he bestrode it. In his dress and flowing mantle of scarlet cloth (presents to him from the Governor), and with his head-dress of tall plumes, he rode amongst the steel-clad cavaliers of Spain, the grandest and most conspicuous figure of them all.

A march of thirty-six leagues brought us to the town of Tuscaluza, which was situated on a peninsula formed by the winding of a river. The army encamped for the night in a lovely valley close to the town. Next morning two of our soldiers were missing, and no one could tell how they had disappeared. It was not probable they had deserted for they were both well-conducted men, and not given to wandering; and now that we were tending towards the coast and the supplies awaiting us there, all the common men of the army were pleased and contented. The disappearance was quite as mysterious and more unaccountable than that of the Princess Cofachique and Aymay, and the negro and Moorish servants. The Governor complained to Tuscaluza, who replied in a very haughty and independent tone; but as nothing could be proved against him for certain, the Governor thought it wise to let the matter drop.

The next day the march was resumed southwards, in the direction of the fortified town called Movill, which was the stronghold and place of arms of Tuscaluza, and stood in the midst of a populous and fertile country. Owing to the strength of this place, and the mistrust entertained by the Governor of Tuscaluza, it was determined to approach it with caution. The Governor himself accordingly took the command of an advance guard of a hundred horse and a hundred foot, and, in company with the cacique, set out for Movill, leaving instructions with the camp-master general to follow with the main force as soon as possible. I accompanied the Governor.

Arrived before the town, a splendid train of Indian warriors, clad in skin robes, and wearing brilliant plumes of feathers, came out to meet us. With this escort, and a troop of dancing girls, the Governor entered the town side by side with Tuscaluza, in his flaming red dress and mantle,

followed by the train of horsemen in glittering armour. The town stood on a fine plain, and was surrounded by a high wall formed of huge trunks of trees driven into the ground, side by side, and wedged together. These were crossed within and without by others, smaller and longer, bound to them by bands made of split canes and wild vines. The whole was thickly plastered over with a kind of mortar, made of clay and straw trampled together, which filled up every chink and crevice of the woodwork, appearing as if smoothed with a trowel. Throughout its whole circuit the wall was pierced with loopholes, from whence arrows might be discharged at an enemy, and at every fifty paces it was surmounted by a tower capable of holding seven or eight fighting men. Many of the trees which had been driven into the ground had taken root and thrown out branches, overshading the ramparts and forming a crown of foliage around the village. There were but two gates to the place, one east and one west. In the centre was a large open square with the principal dwellings at the sides. The whole number of houses in the place, apart from the mere huts, did not exceed eighty, but they were of large size, and capable of lodging from five hundred to fifteen hundred persons. Many were built after the Indian fashion, with one great hall in the centre for general use, and several rooms around for private use. Those great houses belonged to the cacique and the chief lords of the Indians, and were constructed with more than common skill.

The square being reached, the party dismounted, and the horses were taken outside the village. One of the large houses was assigned to the Governor, and a smaller one near it to his servants. The rest of the men were lodged in huts and cabins about a bowshot beyond the walls. The Governor was not well pleased with this arrangement, as it divided his small force, and rather isolated himself, but he thought it would do for the short time until the arrival of the camp-master with the main body of the army. It was not long, however, before suspicions were aroused. Tuscaluza, in a haughty and defiant manner, left the Governor, who desired to keep him near him, and went to one of the houses where armed Indians were seen going in and out. It was also observed by the Spaniards, soon after, that all the great houses in the vicinity seemed full of armed warriors, and

that no women nor children were visible. Upon this, the Governor caused the word to be passed quietly amongst the troops to be on their guard and ready for action at the first alarm. We had not long to wait, for scarcely had we been put on the alert when the war-whoop of the Indians rang through the town, and from every house they sallied out and fell upon the Spaniards. Though vastly outnumbered, our men presented a stout front to the enemy, only giving way inch by inch until they reached the gate of the town and passed through into the country beyond, leaving five of their number behind them slain. The dismounted horsemen then ran to where they had left their steeds tied up; but so close were they pressed, that some had only time to cut the halters and get away, whilst the more tardy not only failed to free their horses, but were shot down by innumerable arrows, amidst the exultant yells of the Indians. It was now quite plain that we were the victims of a deliberate and well-laid plot to massacre us.

The enemy, being in great force, divided into two bands, one to press upon the Spaniards, the other to destroy the loose horses and secure the effects of the army, which lay in heaps under the wall and about the fields. Everything fell into the hands of the enemy, except the baggage of Andres de Vaseoncellos, which had not arrived. The Indians conveyed the spoils into their town with great manifestations of triumph. They knocked off the chains of the slaves who had carried the baggage, and gave them weapons to fight with.

Meanwhile the few cavaliers who had been able to mount their horses, together with some troops just arrived in advance of the main body, united their forces and endeavoured to protect their comrades who were fighting on foot. The approach of the cavalry checked the impetuosity of the Indians, and afforded time for the footmen to rally and form. Horse and foot, in two bodies, then charged the enemy with fury, and drove them back into the village, whither our men sought to follow them, but were assailed with such showers of stones and arrows from the walls and loopholes as compelled them to retreat. Thereupon the Indians again rushed forth, some by the gate, others over the wall, and, closing with the Spaniards, fought them with

reckless courage. They seized hold of the lances of the horsemen, and some of them were in this way dragged more than two hundred paces from the wall before they would let go their hold.

So the battle swayed backward and forward for more than three hours without cease, the Spaniards always standing by each other, being few in number, and keeping a front to the enemy, upon which alone their safety depended. They found that they suffered more severely when near the village, from the missiles launched from the wall, and that their best chance was in the open field, where they had room to manœuvre their horses and wield their lances. They accordingly kept away from the village, and the Indians, following them up, sustained great losses, for, having no defensive armour, every blow was effective. The Indians, perceiving the disadvantage to them of fighting in this way, finally fell back to the village, closed the gate, and manned the ramparts.

Upon this the Governor ordered the cavalry, as being best armed for the purpose, to dismount, and, taking bucklers for their defence and battle-axes in their hands, to attack the gate and endeavour to force a way into the village. This force, two hundred strong, put itself in order and dashed forward to the assault. It was received with showers of arrows, stones, and missiles of various kinds, and was so severely handled that it had to fall back. Again it was re-formed and again advanced to attack the gate, but only to be again repulsed with heavy loss. This happened several times, but on each occasion the Spaniards were able to inflict some damage on the gate before being driven back. At length, in one final charge, our men forced the partly-demolished gate, and entered the village in the midst of showers of darts and stones. The gateway being very narrow, those of them who could not readily pass through attacked the wall with their axes. The face of the wall, being composed of clay mixed with straw, was soon demolished, leaving bare the crossbeams and their fastenings, which formed the inner part of the wall. Over these the Spaniards swarmed in numbers, and thus got into the village to aid their comrades who had passed through the gate and were being sorely pressed by the enemy. The Indians fought desperately in the streets, and from the tops

of the houses hurled upon the Spaniards darts, stones, and logs of wood, annoying them very much. Some of the houses were stormed and captured; but as the Spaniards could not afford to retain possession of them, having no men to spare for such a purpose, they decided to set fire to them in order to prevent their being re-occupied by the enemy. The houses, being largely composed of reeds and other combustible materials, were soon in a blaze, and the fire spreading rapidly from house to house, the whole village quickly became wrapped in flames and smoke. The fighting went on as desperately as ever in the midst of the general conflagration, for the Indians would neither yield nor retreat, although their final defeat was now evident, for the whole of the available Spanish force was now in the village.

CHAPTER XII.

I am cut off in a house—Preparations for defence—Attack and repulse of the Indians—The fighting in the streets continued—De Soto leads a charge of horse—"Our Lady and Santiago!"—The whole town in flames—Great slaughter of Indians—No surrender—The women fight like demons—Tardy arrival of our main body—Clearing the streets—End of a nine hours' battle—Our terrible losses and deplorable state—Good news from Achusi—Ships there—Discontent of the army—De Soto fears its disbandment at Achusi—Resolves to avoid the coast and again march inland.

SO far I have merely narrated what was told to me of the earlier part of the day's conflict, in which I had no personal share. What follows is of my own experience and knowledge.

I have said that a large house in the square of the village had been assigned for the use of the Governor and his attendants, and thither all the camp equipage had been carried and stored. At the beginning of the disturbance the Governor, before sallying out at the head of his force, had ordered me to remain behind with a few men to hold the house, and protect the baggage at all hazards. At once I set about barricading the place and making preparations to defend it to the last. We were thirteen men in all, but only nine of us were combatants—three cross-bowmen, five halberdiers, and my trusty Indian servant, Choquo, of Muscozo's tribe, who had accompanied and remained with me ever since we left the coast. He was expert in the use of the bow and arrow, and thoroughly faithful to us. There were two other Indians, slaves of the Governor, but sullen and unreliable. The remaining two were a monk and a friar, who rendered us good help in barricading the place, and afterwards by earnest prayers for our delivery. Having closed every opening and strengthened weak places, I made such a disposition as I considered

best of my small force of eight men, and then anxiously awaited events. We were left long unmolested, though we could hear the shouts and yells of combatants and the noises of battle—sometimes far off, and sometimes near at hand. The enemy had not troubled to assail the Governor's house during the heat of their conflict with the Spaniards beyond the walls of the village, thinking, no doubt, that it was in their power, whenever they had leisure, to take it and plunder its contents. When, however, they had retired from the open and closed the town gate against the Spaniards, they turned their attention to the house, not supposing that it contained any Spaniards.

Their surprise was great when they found it strongly defended, but they soon attacked us with great vigour and persistency. Again and again they sought to break down the great door, and to force an entrance by the now well-secured window openings, but were each time driven back with loss from our arrows, discharged through loopholes and apertures left for the purpose by us in our defences. At length they abandoned this line of attack, and turned their attention to forcing an entrance by the roof, to which hundreds of them mounted. Very soon they had made three or four openings; but so well did we ply our cross-bows and our faithful Indian shoot his arrows, that every enemy who showed himself at an opening was at once transfixed. Nevertheless our position was most precarious, for should but a few Indians succeed in entering and in engaging our attention, others could take advantage of the circumstance, and we should be quickly overwhelmed by numbers. There was also some danger that the Indians, despairing of destroying us by other means, might throw burning brands into the house and set it on fire. However, there was nothing to be done then but to keep on as we had begun; and soon indeed the saints had pity upon us, and, hearkening to the prayers of the reverend fathers, who did not cease to invoke their aid, sent us timely relief. The Spaniards having, as before mentioned, fought their way into the town, soon arrived at the door of the house and dispersed our assailants. Then we pulled down the obstructions we had placed against the door, and rushed out to join our comrades in this hand-to-hand contest with the Indians.

The tide of conflict had now turned decisively in our favour. The battle had lasted four hours, and although the Indians were now at a hopeless disadvantage, nothing could quell their fury, and not one of them sought to fly or beg for mercy. De Soto himself was in command, fighting in the square on foot with the rest of the troops. But waxing hot, and weary with his exertions, he hastened out of the village, secured a horse, sprang into the saddle, and, followed by Nuño Tobar, galloped back into the square, lance in hand, shouting the battle cry of "Our Lady and Santiago!" Calling out to the Spaniards to clear a way for him, he dashed into the thickest of the enemy, followed by Tobar. They spurred their chargers up and down through the masses of Indians in the square and principal street, riding down some, lancing others, now right now left, and leaving a track of carnage wherever they passed. Those manœuvres greatly aided the Spaniards who were on foot in attacking and dispersing the Indians. Meanwhile the fire was raging through the village, and making horrible ravages amongst the enemy. Many were cut off in the houses (including women and children), and those who threw themselves from the roofs were either killed by the fall or slain by the Spaniards. At one time a strong wind swept both flames and smoke along the street upon the Indians, who, while thus blinded and bewildered, were charged by their enemies and driven back; but the wind veering, favoured them in turn, and they soon regained all the ground they had lost.

Maddened at seeing their ranks thinned, and their warriors lying slaughtered in heaps, the savages called upon their women to seize the weapons of the slain and avenge their death. Many had already been fighting by the side of their husbands, but on this appeal every one rushed to the conflict. Some armed themselves with the swords, lances, and partisans of the Spanish soldiery who had been either killed or disarmed, and thus wounded them with their own weapons; others seized bows and arrows, which they plied with strength and skill almost equal with that of their husbands. In their fury they threw themselves upon our weapons; for the courage of women, when once aroused, is more ardent and reckless, and her spirit more vehement, than that of man. But the Spaniards, out

of consideration for their sex, and in pity of their despair, abstained as much as possible from harming them.

While the battle was thus furiously raging at Movill, the master of the camp was loitering by the way with his forces. Instead of speedily following De Soto, as ordered, he was tardy in leaving the camp, and on the march allowed his men to scatter in the fields, hunting and amusing themselves. And as for some time there had been little or no trouble with the Indians, a feeling of security had been engendered, and precautions were neglected. So they came along unsuspicious of danger, till some who were more in advance heard the distant clangour of drum and trumpet and the noise and shouts of combatants, and saw a great column of smoke rising in the air. Suspecting the cause, they passed the alarm to those behind, and all now pressed forward with the utmost speed to the scene of action. There they found Spaniards and Indians still hotly engaged on the ground without the town. The new comers brought timely help to the Spaniards, but it was yet a long time before the Indians were driven back to the town, pursued by our horsemen.

It was now within an hour of sunset, but within the town the battle raged as furiously as ever, the cries of the combatants mingling with the roar of flames and the noise of falling roofs and walls. As yet no horsemen had fought within the town except De Soto and Nuño Tobar, but now a great number of cavalry dashed in at the gate, dispersing themselves through the streets, routing and killing all the natives they encountered.

Ten or twelve cavaliers spurred up the main street, where the battle was hottest, and coming upon the rear of a body of Indians, male and female, who were fighting with the fury of demons, broke through them with such impetuosity as not merely to overturn them, but also several of the Spaniards with whom they were contending. The carnage was horrible, for the savages refused to surrender or lay down their arms, but fought until all were slain.

Thus ended this sanguinary struggle, which had continued during nine hours. The village was a smoking ruin, covered with slain, and victory declared for the Spaniards

just as the sun went down. Forty-two Spaniards fell in the conflict, eighteen of them receiving their fatal wounds either in the eyes or mouth; for the Indians, finding their bodies cased in armour, aimed at their faces. There scarcely remained a Spaniard that was not more or less wounded, some in many places. Thirteen died before their wounds could be dressed, and twenty-two after. To this loss must be added that of forty-two horses killed by the enemy, and mourned by the Spaniards as if they had been so many fellow-soldiers.

Our condition after the battle was truly deplorable. Our loss in men and horses had been terrible; most of the survivors were wounded, and all suffering from exhaustion by fatigue and hunger. But the worst calamity of all was the loss of our supplies, which had been destroyed in the burning of the town. These included our ammunition and spare weapons, cloth and clothing of every description, medicine and surgical appliances, some wine and wheaten flour (reserved for the office of the mass), and a vast quantity of miscellaneous stores. Before this unfortunate battle, the army, though reduced in numbers by previous losses, was comparatively richer than ever in military and other supplies; after the battle, little was left beyond that which happened to be in the possession of each individual. There was but one surgeon to attend to the multitude of wounded, and the greater part had to shift for themselves.

It was now towards the end of August, and the nights were cold and dewy; but no shelter could be had, for not a house in the village remained standing. Booths made of branches were constructed against such of the walls as still stood, and in these the wounded were deposited on straw. The fat of the dead horses and some of the slain Indians was converted into ointment; and the shirts of the dead Spaniards, and of some of the living ones, were cut up for bandages. The night passed amidst bitter lamentations and dying groans, many Spaniards perishing miserably before morning. The army was unable to move for nearly three weeks. Had any considerable force of Indians resolutely attacked it during that time, it would probably have been utterly destroyed.

In our desperate situation the cheering news reached us

that ships with white men had arrived at the sea coast, whither De Soto had of late been directing his course. There could be no doubt that this was the supply fleet of Maldonado from Havañah, which was to have arrived about this time in the Bay of Achusi, from which, we understood, we were only seven days' march. Thus the end of our sufferings appeared to be close at hand; and whatever might be our varying views as to the remote future, we all rejoiced at the prospect of almost immediate relief from our present miseries.

As for the Governor, he had accomplished, so far, his general design, though his highest hopes had not been realized, and he had met with some bitter misfortunes. He had made the wide sweep he had planned out originally, from the sea to the north-east, thence northward and north-west, and then southward to his present position. He had surveyed the interior of the country over a wide range, and fully informed himself as to its nature, resources, and capabilities, and of the character and disposition of its inhabitants. The conditions he had discovered were altogether favourable to his primary scheme of founding a great Spanish colony, which would assure the possession of all the provinces he had explored, and perhaps of all the undiscovered and unknown parts of the country to its utmost limits. Afterwards the search for gold could be resumed with greater ease and advantage. His ships were in the Bay of Achusi, laden with every requisite for purposes of conquest and colonization, and it only remained for him to take the final steps, and say the final words, to launch the great undertaking.

But while De Soto welcomed the ships as supplying him with the means of founding his colony, many of the soldiers and gentlemen of his army welcomed them as a means of escaping from an accursed land, where there were no rich countries to plunder, and where they had experienced nothing but hardships, losses, and disasters.

Some of them had been engaged in the conquest of Peru, and contrasted the wealth of that golden empire with the poverty of the land through which they had recently struggled, where neither gold nor silver was to be found; and they did not fail to dwell upon this contrast when conversing with their companions. The Spaniards

generally were disheartened by the disasters of the recent battle, and the implacable fierceness displayed by the natives. They saw that such a people were not to be easily subjugated. Instead, therefore, of wearing themselves out in this unpromising land, it seemed better to seek other countries already conquered and abounding with wealth, as Mexico and Peru, where they might enrich themselves with less risk and less toil. For these reasons they determined, on reaching the sea-shore, to abandon Florida and seek their fortunes in New Spain.

Secret information of these murmurings was brought to De Soto by some of his most devoted followers. He could scarcely credit it, and went through the camp at night, alone and in disguise, to ascertain the truth. In this way he overheard a conversation in the hut of Juan Gaytan, the treasurer, in which that cavalier, and several of his comrades, expressed their determination to abandon the enterprise, and either sail for Mexico or Peru, or return to Spain by the ships at Achusi.

De Soto stood aghast at hearing these resolves. He saw that his present force would disband the moment his followers could shift for themselves; and he was aware that it would be impossible for him to raise a new army. He had no booty of gold or silver to display, with which to tempt new adventurers; and the specimens of pearls which he had intended to send to Cuba were all lost in the conflagration of Movill. Should his present forces desert him, therefore, he would be stripped of his dignity and command, blasted in his reputation, his fortune would have been expended in vain, and his enterprise, which had cost so much toil and trouble, would be a subject of scoffing rather than of renown. De Soto was a man extremely jealous of his honour; and as he reflected upon these gloomy prospects, they produced sudden and desperate resolves. He disguised his anger and his knowledge of what he had overheard, but determined to frustrate them by the desperate expedient of turning his back upon the coast and striking again inland, not going nearer to Achusi. In our lack of all supplies, this was a mad thing to think of; but De Soto was no longer as he had been. He had become moody, irritable, and tyrannical, and his one thought was to keep the army

together at any risk. There were murmurings and threatenings when it was known what he purposed, but the spirit of mutiny was overawed by his sternness. In his best state of mind he was a strict disciplinarian, and it was soon seen that now he would stick at nothing in compelling obedience to the absolute authority given to him by the royal charter.

CHAPTER XIII.

March northward from Movill—De Soto changed—Harassed by the Indians—Tuscaluza and Ucita—Wintering at Chicaza—Night surprise—Town fired—Fierce battle—Dear victory—The camp-master dismissed—The hand of Tuscaluza—Fresh quarters—Wretched plight of the army—Break up of camp—Another battle—Massacre of Indians—An Indian challenge—Our heavy losses—Ucita dying—I baptize him—Where is Aymay?

ON Sunday the 18th of November, 1540, the army broke up its encampment at Movill, and marched northward into unexplored regions. About this time I was taken more than ever into the confidence of the Governor. He had shown me much favour from the time he became interested in my relations with Aymay; and since he began to mistrust his own countrymen his confidences in me became more frequent and intimate. I was thus able to discover, to my sorrow and alarm, that all his former energy of mind and precision of purpose had gone from him, and that he was no longer capable of attempting any great enterprise or forming any comprehensive plan. He seemed like a man tired of life and only desirous of having done with existence.

In our northward march we were again harassed by the Indians, especially at the passage of two large rivers which lay on our line of march. Up to this time we had supposed that we had for ever disposed of Tuscaluza and his followers at the battle of Movill, and indeed we had been assured that he and all his principal warriors had perished in that contest. But we gathered from some prisoners taken in the late skirmishes that this was not so, and that certainly Tuscaluza himself, having recovered from wounds received in the battle, was once more in the field against us, as relentless as ever, and resolute to drive us from the country or exterminate us. This was bad

news, nor was it ameliorated by what I ascertained in a little time—namely, that the vengeful chief Ucita had, since the battle, joined Tuscaluza with certain reinforcements. But of Aymay I could get no news. Of her the Indian captives could tell me nothing, and I plainly saw their ignorance was real. From this I judged she could be nowhere in those regions, and had probably been taken by her father to some place beyond the reach of the army.

Always marching northward—to increase the distance between us and Achusi as quickly as might be—we came in time to a fertile province called Chicaza, and town of the same name, the inhabitants flying before us. The winter having now set in, and snow falling, the Governor resolved to stay at this place till spring. The natives annoyed us night and day, but did not attack us in force until one dark and cloudy night, when they assaulted the town at once at three different places. Having crept as near as they could without alarming our sentries, they came on with blasts of conch-shells, the rumbling of wooden drums, yells and war-whoops, and rushed like demons to the assault. Many had lighted matches resembling cords, made of a vegetable substance, which, when whirled in the air, burst into a flame; others had arrows tipped with the same inflammable matter. These they directed against the houses, which, being of reed and straw, instantly took fire, and, the wind blowing strongly, were soon wrapped in flames.

The Spaniards, although surprised by this sudden and furious assault, rushed out to defend themselves. De Soto, who always slept in his doublet and hose, that he might be prepared against such emergencies, clasped on his casque, drew on a surcoat of quilted cotton an inch and a half thick—the best defence against the enemy's arrows—seized buckler and lance, mounted his horse, and dashed fearlessly into the midst of his foes. Ten or twelve horsemen followed him, though not immediately.

With their wonted spirit, the soldiers started up in every direction to repel the Indians, but they fought under great disadvantages. The strong wind blowing the flames and smoke directly in their faces, extremely disconcerted them. Some were obliged to crawl out of their quarters on all fours to escape the fire; some, bewildered, fled from house

to house; others rushed out into the plain; whilst some flew to rescue the sick and wounded, who were in a dwelling apart. Before succour arrived, however, many of these latter had perished in the fierce conflagration.

The cavalry had not time to arm themselves or saddle their steeds. Some succeeded in rescuing theirs from the flames; others, who had fastened up their horses with iron chains, because they were restive from high mettle, not having time to release them, were obliged to leave them to their fate and fly for their own lives. A few who were enabled to mount galloped to the assistance of the Governor, who, with a scanty band of followers, had been engaged some time with the Indians. The other two bodies of the enemy entering the village, simultaneously attacked the Spaniards on each flank, and, aided by the fire and smoke, made dreadful havoc.

Forty or fifty soldiers stationed at the eastern end of the village, where the fire and the battle raged most fiercely, fled into the fields. These were rallied with some difficulty, and, with a company of twenty-four Portuguese cavalry, joined in the attack upon the Indians, who were at last beaten off and chased from the field. But our loss was very severe. Forty men and fifty horses had been slain, and a further number of each more or less severely wounded. In addition, the herd of swine which De Soto had so far brought with the army, was more than half destroyed by the fire. This disastrous battle, following so close upon that of Movill, made the Governor more gloomy than ever. The camp-master, who had again been at fault—this time in the posting of sentinels—was dismissed from his post, and another put in his stead.

No one doubted but this surprise was the work of Tuscaluza, though in the darkness and confusion he had not been certainly seen. The manner of the plan and all the generalship were his, and like unto those which had well-nigh ruined us at Movill.

We shifted our quarters to a neighbouring village, called in the Indian tongue Little Chicaza. Here we set up forges to retemper the weapons injured by the fire, and to make lances, shields, saddles, etc., to replace those which had been consumed. We were all in a wretched plight for want of sufficient clothing and covering for night use. Such

skins as could be found were made use of, and the soldiers contrived to make thick bed coverings or mats of long soft grass and dried ivy. The Indians, exulting in the havoc they had wrought, kept our men on the alert, particularly at night, for it was feared that they might burn us out of our new quarters as they had done out of the old.

At length, on the 1st of April, 1541, the camp was broken up, and after a march of four or five leagues we came in sight of an Indian fortress, strongly constructed and garrisoned by a large force of natives, who looked like devils rather than men. Their bodies were painted in stripes—white, black, and red—appearing as if clothed with fantastic garments. Their faces were blackened, and they had red circles round their eyes, which gave them a ferocious aspect. Some wore feathers upon their heads, and others horns. The fortress, which was called Alibamo, was built in the form of a quadrangle, fenced with strong palisades. The sides were each four hundred paces in length. Within, the area was traversed from side to side by two other palisades, dividing it into three separate parts. In the outer wall were three portals, so low and narrow that a man could not enter on horseback. Beyond these there was a second wall, with three entrances, and behind this a third; so that if the outer wall were gained, the garrison could retreat to the second, and so on. In the last wall were likewise three portals, opening upon a narrow and deep river that flowed in the rear of the fort. So high were the banks of this stream, that it was exceedingly difficult to clamber up on foot; they were consequently inaccessible to horses. A few rude dilapidated bridges were thrown across the river, affording a difficult passage.

The Indians had constructed their fortress in this manner that the Spaniards might not avail themselves of their horses, but be obliged to contend with them on foot; in which mode of encounter they fancied they were not only equal, but superior to their enemies.

De Soto, having carefully reconnoitred the fortress, ordered a hundred of the best armed horsemen to dismount, and forming three squadrons, advanced three abreast, and commenced the attack; whilst the foot, who were less completely cased in defensive armour, supported

their rear. The squadrons were ordered to attack the three entrances simultaneously.

The Indians, who had until this moment remained shut up in their fortress, perceiving the preparations which the Spaniards were making for the assault, sallied out to battle, a hundred men from each portal. At the first discharge of their arrows, Diego de Castro, Louis Bravo, and Francisco de Figueroa, were brought to the ground mortally wounded. All three were pierced in the thigh with shafts barbed with flint; for the savages, having gained some experience during their warfare with the Spaniards, always aimed at the thigh, which was never guarded. The Spaniards, seeing their companions fall, shouted to one another to rush in, and leave the Indians no time to gall them with their arrows; then, charging furiously, they drove the enemy before them, to the very portals of the fortress. The Spaniards rushed in with them pell-mell.

The carnage within the fortress was dreadful. The savages were crowded together, and the Spaniards, remembering the injuries they had received from them during the past winter, gave vent to their rage, and massacred them without mercy. As they wore no defensive armour, they were easily despatched. Many, trusting to their agility, leaped from the wall into the plains, and, falling into the hands of their enemies, were instantly slain. Many escaped to the bridges by the portals in the rear; but, in their haste to cross, several were jostled into the river which flowed beneath. Others, pressed by their foes, threw themselves from the banks and swam across. In a short time the fortress was abandoned and in the power of the Spaniards; but those Indians who reached the opposite bank formed themselves in battle array.

One of the savages who had escaped, desirous of showing his skill with the bow and arrow, separated himself from his companions and shouted to the Spaniards, giving them to understand by signs and words that he challenged any archer to come out and have a shot with him, in order to prove which was the better marksman. Upon this, several of our men proposed to accept the challenge, and, out of the number, I was selected to do so, as a good bowman. I accordingly stepped out from a clump of

trees, where we had sheltered ourselves, and walked down to the river bank opposite the Indian. Watching each other's movements, we both drew at the same moment, and, as I saw my arrow strike the Indian full in the breast, I felt myself wounded in the neck. The arrow had, however, only entered under the skin for about an inch, and lay crossed in the wound, from whence it was readily extracted by being cut in two. The Indian had fallen, and was carried away by his friends, but whether dead or alive it was impossible to say. His comrades made no attempt to revenge themselves on me, and I went quickly away, well pleased with my success.

In this battle we lost in all fifteen men killed on the field or mortally wounded, in addition to several horses. At muster on the morning after the fight three of our men remained unaccounted for, and the Governor issued orders to me to take a company of ten halberdiers and explore the village in search of them. Choquo accompanied us. On entering the village I found the chief streets encumbered with smouldering ruins, and strewn with the dead bodies of naked Indians, some horribly contorted, some ghastly with hideous wounds, some partially consumed by fire. In searching carefully about we at length came upon the dead bodies of our three men, lying just within the doorway of a half-destroyed house. They were close together, and near them were four dead Indians, evidently slain by the weapons of the Spaniards, before they themselves had succumbed to overwhelming numbers. The floor of the place was like that of a slaughter-house.

As we were engaged in preparing for the removal of the remains of our comrades, in order to give them decent burial, our attention was attracted by a kind of moan proceeding from another part of the dusky room. Looking about we saw a wounded Indian, propped in a sitting position in an angle of the walls. My men were for despatching the creature at once, pursuant to their merciless practice; but this I would by no means permit, holding it to be unchristian to slay a wounded and helpless man in cold blood, even though he be a savage and a pagan. As I approached to have a nearer look at the Indian, I was amazed at recognizing the only too familiar face of Ucita, the father of Aymay, and my former master when I was a

slave amongst the Indians! I went close to him to see if I might assist him, and saw that he had a terrible wound in his right breast, as if from a sword or spear thrust. He was covered with congealed blood, and all the place around him was in the same state, showing that he must have lost a great deal of blood. The blood still slowly trickled from the wound every time he breathed, and it was plain enough that he was at his last gasp.

My heart was moved with great pity at this sad spectacle, for though Ucita had treated me cruelly, and left upon my body the permanent marks of his violence, he had done so after the nature of the Indians. I remembered, too, the great wrongs he had suffered at the hands of the Spaniards, and I did not forget that he was the father of Aymay. I think he knew me from the time he saw me struggling to keep back my men from killing him. When I came near to him he pronounced the Indian word for "water," and I at once despatched one of the men to procure some, meanwhile doing my best to staunch the bleeding from the wound in his chest, and place him in an easier position. For these good intentions he expressed himself grateful, though it was plain enough that his case was beyond all help. The halberdier soon returned with his steel cap full of water. Of this Ucita drank deeply, and with the rest I sprinkled his face and washed the wound, which I saw passed right through his body from chest to back. The wonder was that he should still be alive. As well as he was able he expressed his gratitude to me for my attentions, and finding him in this softened mood I made haste to ascertain what he knew of Aymay. After a little hesitation he made answer, but in tones so low and indistinct that both Choquo and myself had great difficulty in understanding him. However, we made out between us that the abduction of Aymay and the Princess Cofachique had been accomplished by him and a party of Indians. The princess, he told us, had been sent back to her own country, well content to be quit of the Spaniards. The two negroes and the Barbary Moor had gone with her of their own accord. As for his daughter Aymay, he had sent her away under an escort to a place in the north-east, which he called Quilagha, the cacique of which was a friend and relation of his. Something also he said in my favour, and of my difference

from other white men, and about the Spaniards overrunning the country and destroying the Indians, and of his present willingness that I should protect Aymay if I again found her. I took his hand in mine as a pledge of this, and he seemed so to understand it, though hand-clasping is not a custom amongst the Indians.

Ucita was now fast sinking, and incapable of further speech. Then the thought occurred to me that, as a Christian, I could do a last and inestimable service to this man whose nature was so noble, and who had suffered so much at the hands of Christians. Taking the steel cap of the halberdier, which still had some water left in it, I told Ucita that it was my intention to commend his soul to the God of the Christians, by sprinkling him with the water. He did not seem to understand me—which indeed was not surprising—but he thanked me for what he perceived was some good intention on my part. I asked him if there were not many things he had done in his lifetime for which he was sorry, to which he readily answered "yes." Taking this avowal as a sufficient act of contrition, and the only one possible under the circumstances, I at once administered baptism to him—and barely in time—for he fainted and died in a few minutes afterwards. I had thus the consolation of knowing that I had done my best to ensure the salvation of the father of Aymay, and of believing that, however imperfect the rite, the merciful Redeemer would accept it as sufficient, and have pity in the next world upon the poor benighted pagan, who had been so cruelly and undeservedly punished in this. In the afternoon of the same day I returned to the house with Henry Stanley and some of the soldiers, and, having dug a grave with the tools we had brought with us, we buried Ucita at the edge of the forest, and placed a rough cross of wood above his remains. In the same locality we buried the three Spaniards, placing similar emblems over their graves.

De Soto commended me for what I had done for Ucita, though he confessed he was not sorry to be rid of an enemy so formidable and so implacable. As to Aymay (suspecting my thoughts), he pointed out that he could render me no assistance in any attempt to recover her. She appeared to be in safe hands; and, at any rate, he could not, in the present circumstances of the army, take

any action for her recovery. I could not but acknowledge that all this was very reasonable. Aymay was beyond our reach; and even the position of her abiding place was uncertain. Nevertheless it seemed to me that even this vague indication of her abiding-place brought her nearer to me, and I felt somewhat more confident of meeting her again, though when, and by what means, I could not then imagine.

CHAPTER XIV.

Again on the march—Avoiding the sea—A mighty river—The Father-water—Misconduct of soldiers—Boat-building—Crossing the great river (Rio Grande)—Our most northerly point—A salt lake and river—Getting salt—A hideous and fierce race—Our losses—In good winter quarters—Despair of finding gold—Wretched state of the army—De Soto's mistakes—He decides to turn back—Plans for the future.

AFTER the fight in this place, we rested four days for the comfort of the wounded men and horses. Then we marched slowly, and, it must be owned, sorrowfully towards the north, with a westerly inclination. This course De Soto took for no other reason than that of avoiding approach to the sea, which lay in the opposite direction. It was at this time that he raised me to be a captain in the army, which was a great honour for me, and an unusual one to confer upon one who was not a Spaniard and of noble family. But several vacancies had occurred, and there was a difficulty in finding fit and reliable men to fill them. Henry Stanley was similarly promoted a few days afterwards. I had long enjoyed some favour with De Soto, and shared somewhat in his confidence, and he well knew that both Henry and myself were free from the spirit of mutiny which his own countrymen had displayed of late.

For seven days we traversed an uninhabited country, full of forests and swamps, and at last came to the banks of the largest river in all Florida, and, perhaps, in all the world. The Indians in its vicinity call it the "Mischesepe," words which signify Father-water, and the Spaniards, by common consent, gave it the name of Rio Grande, or great river.

Coming to a village called Chica, the misconduct of the common soldiers provoked the people, and we soon found we had to reckon with a force of no less than four thousand

well-armed warriors, headed by their chief. This caused us great uneasiness, and made our position precarious, and even dangerous. Not only had our numbers been greatly reduced by losses in battle, but many of our men, owing to wounds and sickness, were not in an efficient condition. Then the country around us was full of trees, and cut up in all directions by innumerable streams and channels, so that, in the event of hostilities breaking out with the natives, our cavalry would be of no use, and the Indians would have every advantage on their side.

Considerations such as these made the Governor anxious to maintain peace, almost on any terms. Experience had over and over again shown that nothing good ever came of these incessant conflicts with the natives. Day after day men and horses were being lost in purposeless encounters, and our numbers were diminishing without any hope of obtaining reinforcements. Under former circumstances, De Soto would have been in a position to conciliate the angry cacique and his warriors by liberal presents and apologies, but now he had only the latter to offer—and he did not spare them. The Indians who had been made prisoners were given up, and all the plunder restored; and those acts, with a friendly visit from De Soto, mollified the cacique, and induced him to make peace.

After a rest of six days we resumed our march along the windings of the great river, going very slowly on account of the sick and wounded. On the fourth day we came to a wide opening or plain, where we encamped, and commenced building four large boats for the conveyance of the army across the river, here half a league wide. The delay thereby caused afforded time for the natives to gather on the other bank, and in fleets of canoes on the river. At the end of twenty days four large boats were ready, and three hours before dawn they were filled with soldiers, including four picked troopers for each boat. The rowers pulled strongly across the river, and a safe and unmolested landing was effected on the opposite side. The rest of the force was carried over before sunset. The boats were then broken up for the sake of the nails, as we were now very short of iron; and after a couple of days' rest we resumed our march.

Our way for four days lay through a wilderness of swamps and morasses, but on the morning of the fifth we saw from the summit of a lofty ridge a pleasant country, covered with maize and fruit trees as far as the eye could reach, and at a short distance a large village of some four hundred dwellings, situated on the bank of a river. In this village, and others we came to in the same region, we were hospitably entertained--in some cases for days in succession—without any disagreement with the natives, strict orders having been issued against molesting them in any way. In this part of the country we obtained from the natives a great quantity of the skins of deers, bears, panthers, and wild cats, which we converted into much-needed clothing. We here also obtained some Indian bucklers made of buffalo hide, to replace those which had been lost. A village named Casquin, where we stayed five days, was the most northern point reached by the expedition. The inhabitants told us that still further north the country was not fit for cultivation, and but thinly inhabited, on account of the extreme cold. Buffaloes roamed over it in vast herds. Such tribes as were there were wild people, who had no settled dwellings, and lived by the chase and by fishing, and were very different from the natives of the other parts of Florida. Nothing was known of the existence of gold in that direction.

From Casquin our march took a westerly direction, and then a southwardly one. At one place we came upon a salt river and lake—a most welcome chance, as the army suffered constantly from want of salt. Eight days were spent in making and storing a large quantity. The blue sand along the borders of the lake was collected, in the Indian fashion, and put into baskets wide above and narrow at bottom. Water was then run through the baskets to extract the salt, which was finally obtained by boiling the water.

Tula was the next province through which we passed in our almost purposeless march. Hitherto we had found the natives of Florida handsome, tall and well-made, but the people of Tula seemed to be of quite a different and inferior race—large mis-shapen heads, artificially narrowed at the top; frightfully tatooed about the face and inside and outside the lips: altogether hideously ugly. Their disposition

proved as malevolent as their aspect. In a night attack upon our camp they fought like fiends for more than an hour, killing four of our men and wounding so many more that our march was delayed twenty days. Their courage on occasions was almost incredible. The morning after their attack upon our camp some of the soldiers were scattered about examining the dead. Three foot-soldiers and two horsemen were thus employed, when one of the former saw an Indian watching from behind some bushes, and immediately raised the familiar and alarming cry of "Indians! Indians!" and rushed forward to the man. The Indian, seeing he was discovered, stepped manfully out to meet the Spaniard, armed with a battle-axe, which he had by some means got possession of. Wielding it with both hands, he caught the soldier such a blow as to split his shield in two and inflict a bad wound upon his arm, rendering him unfit for further combat. One of the horsemen then charged the Indian, who sought shelter beneath an oak tree. The cavalier not being able to ride under the tree because of its low extending branches, made several thrusts at the enemy with his long lance, but could not reach him. The Indian, watching his opportunity, rushed out brandishing his axe, and smote the horse across the shoulder, laying it open from the withers to the knee, and depriving it of power of motion. At this moment came up Gonzalo Silvestre on foot. He had not hurried, for he thought two horsemen and three foot were sufficient to manage one Indian; but seeing how matters stood as he approached nearer, he hurried up with drawn sword to attack the Indian. The latter, nothing daunted, advanced to meet him, and again grasping the battle-axe struck at Silvestre. The Spaniard was more guarded than his companion and managed his shield better, so that the blow was turned aside, and the axe buried itself in the ground. At once Silvestre struck with his sword, and that so effectively as almost to sever the wrist of his adversary. The Indian, seizing the axe with his other hand, leaped forward and struck at Silvestre's face; but again the blow was warded, and Silvestre, with a sweeping blow of his sword, struck the naked body of the Indian with such force as to cut him in two at the waist, the sharp blade passing clean through his body.

We were glad to have done with those ferocious savages, whose friendship we could not gain, either by presents and fair words, or by menaces and punishment. As soon, therefore, as our wounded were in a condition to be moved, the army resumed its march. In ten days we reached Utiangue, about eighty leagues from Tula. The chief village, of that name, was situated in a fertile but thinly-peopled country. It was well stored with maize, beans, nuts, and plums. The inhabitants fled at our approach, except a few who were made prisoners and detained as servants. The cold weather again coming on, the Governor decided to winter in this place, and caused a strong camp to be constructed in the centre of the village, fearing to occupy the houses lest the Indians should set fire to them. The village was also strengthened by strong palisades and cross railings. The country around supplied abundance of deer, and two kinds of rabbits—one as large as a hare—as well as a variety of other game, both fowl and beast. We had no stint of meat and provisions of all kinds in this place, and the good food and long rest helped greatly to restore the health of the army.

It now began to be acknowledged, even by the most sanguine, that our hopes of finding a golden region were delusive, and in this desponding view the Governor himself shared. The desperate alternative of turning his back upon the sea, lest his men should abandon him, had led to nothing. Our force was diminished by nearly one half, and the greater part of our horses were dead, and most of the remainder lame, from being without shoes for more than a year. The men were ragged and skin-clad, more like a band of savages than Christian soldiers; and sufferings and exasperations of all kinds had made them savage alike in mind and conduct. De Soto had staked all on the finding of gold, and had lost; and he now too late repented of having abandoned his original design of joining his ships at Achusi, and endeavouring to form a colony. It was impossible, in the present plight of the army, to remedy that mistake, or to make a direct march to Achusi; and the idea of wandering further into this unknown and limitless land, and amongst its warlike inhabitants, in the vague hope that gold might somewhere be found, seemed little short of madness.

These considerations oppressed and overwhelmed the Governor, and finally drove him to a resolution which, under the circumstances, seemed the best that could be formed. He determined to advance no further, but to make the best of his way back to the Rio Grande, and establish himself in some strong position on its banks. Then he would have two brigantines built, in which some of the more reliable of his followers could proceed down the river to the sea and carry tidings of his doings to Cuba, and thence procure reinforcements of men and horses, together with supplies of agricultural implements, flocks, herds, seeds, roots, and everything requisite for the colonization and cultivation of a vast fertile country.

CHAPTER XV.

Back towards the Rio Grande—Another great river—A weary march—A haven of rest—Good town and pleasant country—Two brigantines to be built—Explorations—Site for a colony selected—The natives provoked to hostility—A refractory cacique—I am sent to him—My journey—The cacique has the best of the argument—He detains me as hostage—Choquo sent to the Governor—I await his return.

AS soon as the spring was sufficiently advanced, De Soto broke up his winter cantonment and set out in the direction of the Rio Grande. After several weeks of weary marching, through a marshy and inhospitable country, we entered the province of Anilco, remarkable as being the most fertile and populous country we had found west of the Rio Grande, and nearly equal in those respects to Cosa or Apalachee. On reaching the town of Anilco itself, we found it to be situated on a large river, which, we were informed, emptied itself into the Rio Grande. It contained about one hundred spacious houses, grouped about a central open space or public square, one side of which was occupied by the house of the cacique, built, as usual, on rising ground. The country around was full of villages, and well cultivated, the produce being maize, plums, and various sorts of pulse and vegetables. The town was abandoned at our approach, though protected by a strong circular wall of timber and clay several feet thick at the base, but thinner above.

De Soto resolved to establish himself in this part of the country whilst the brigantines were being built. He purposed also, in the meantime, to explore the surrounding regions, in order to select a favourable situation for the colony he intended to establish. Orders were accordingly issued for felling timber, collecting resins and gums (to serve instead of tar and pitch), and for the manufacture of spikes, nails, cordage, and other things. Whilst this

work was going on, an expedition was despatched across the river to discover the nature of the country beyond. It returned with a most favourable report. The name of the province was Quigualtanqui; it was of great extent, very fertile, and with many villages, one of which, near the river, contained five hundred large houses. The natives had fled at the approach of the Spanish troops, who, as usual, appeared to have misconducted themselves, and aroused amongst the Indians a feeling of hostility. De Soto decided that this province would be very suitable for his colonization scheme, being both fertile and populous, as well as contiguous to a fine navigable river. He resolved, therefore, to take possession of it as soon as the brigantines were built and despatched. He could not expect fresh supplies and reinforcements to reach him from Cuba before the end of the year, and the intervening time could be devoted to the subjugation of Quigualtanqui, which he hoped to accomplish by pacific means.

His present desire, however, was to conciliate and secure the confidence of the people in his immediate vicinity, and he accordingly sought by every means to induce the cacique of Anilco to return and be friendly. But the cacique remained obdurate, and at first treated the native messengers, sent to him by De Soto, with great scorn. Later on, he sent word to say that if De Soto would send him a white ambassador as an assurance of good faith, he would open negotiations for returning to Anilco and befriending the Spaniards. This proposal did not please the Governor, for he was very unwilling to place one of his people in the power of the cacique, knowing, as he did, that his means of rescuing or avenging him, in case of treachery, were very deficient. Seeing the embarrassment of the Governor, and knowing the matter to be one of great importance, I thought it proper to volunteer my services for the mission, representing to him that I was the only man of the army who could at all pretend to communicate with the cacique in his own tongue. I also represented that the Governor had substantial guarantees for my good treatment by the cacique in the possession of his chief village and surrounding country. With much reluctance the Governor yielded to my request, and despatched me with friendly assurances to the cacique,

and such few presents as our diminished stores could afford.

I set out on horseback, accompanied by my servant Choquo, and half-a-dozen other Indians to act as guides and carriers. We started in the morning, taking a north-westerly direction. For some distance our way lay through a swampy country, much cut up by ditches and streams, diversified by occasional ridges of dryer ground, but all more or less covered with a dense mass of growing or decaying vegetation, consisting of shrubs and bushes, forest trees, reeds, coarse grasses, and creeping and trailing plants, all very wild, straggling, and tangled. After a time we followed beaten tracks in comparatively open forests, and made more rapid progress, the Indians being at all times able to keep pace with my horse. At night we encamped on an elevated piece of ground, clear of trees, in the centre of which there was a bark hut or shed. This I occupied with Choquo, the other Indians accommodating themselves outside as best they could. The night passed peaceably, and next morning we resumed our march with greatly increased celerity, owing to the more open nature of the country. Before sunset we reached the village where the cacique had taken up his residence after his flight from Anilco.

It was a place of not more than twenty large houses, but we found it occupied by a disproportionate number of Indians, doubtless fugitives from Anilco and vicinity. I was introduced to the chief, and found him a fine man of noble appearance, and about forty years of age. I gave him the presents I had brought with me, which he received with an air of indifference. I then explained to him, in pursuance of my instructions, that the Governor desired to have his friendship and alliance during his stay in that part of the country. I represented that his only object was to build boats as quickly as possible and then betake himself to the other side of the river; that he wished to take nothing by force, but would pay fairly for all he required while he remained in the territory of the cacique.

The cacique, without making any reply to my proposals, closely questioned me as to the motives of the Spaniards in coming into a country so remote from their own. I told him that all white people were curious to know about

strange and foreign countries, and their inhabitants. This did not satisfy him, and he proceeded to further question me in respect to the reports he had heard of white men taking possession of countries belonging to the Indians, enslaving the people and cruelly using them. I was obliged to confess that such things had been done by white men, but I endeavoured to make him understand that De Soto was not a white man of that kind. It was true that he intended to make a settlement in the country, but he hoped to do so with the consent of the Indians, for some caciques had already pressed him to do so in their territory, believing that the Indians would be greatly benefited thereby. It was also true that he had fought with Indians and killed or made slaves of many of them, but this had been in fair fight, and according to the natural usages of warfare, and in every instance the quarrel had not been of his seeking, but was forced upon him by the unreasonable conduct of such Indians.

After much more conversation to the like effect, in which I fear I made but a poor apologist for much of the misconduct of our troops, the cacique became impatient, and launched into vehement abuse of the Spaniards, denouncing them as murderers, thieves, and vagabonds, who were not content to live in their own country, but must needs come abroad to plunder and enslave people who had done them no harm. In reply I begged him to remember that at any rate the Spaniards were now only desirous of leaving his territory as soon as possible, and that if he objected to their presence he could do nothing better than hasten their departure in a peaceable and amicable way. He only answered to this that he should consult his chief men on the subject, and that in the meantime I must remain with him.

I did not at all like the turn affairs had taken, for it seemed to me that I was being detained as a prisoner or hostage. I talked the matter over with Choquo, who had heard all that passed, and he shared in my opinion as to what it signified. However, to put the thing to the test, I directed Choquo to bring me my horse as if I intended to take my departure at once. He did so; but on my attempting to mount I was promptly surrounded by a number of Indians and prevented from doing so. Upon this I again sought

out the cacique and complained of what had taken place, but he haughtily answered that what had been done was by his orders, and that I must not presume to leave without his permission, nor make further attempt to do so under pain of being treated as a prisoner. All this he made very clear, and there was now no mistaking my real position. I was assigned lodgings in one of the smaller houses of the village, which I occupied in company with Choquo, and everything necessary was provided for us. My first duty was to communicate with the Governor and let him know what had come of my embassy, and what was my actual situation. I resolved that if possible Choquo should be my messenger, for he could supply the Governor with the fullest particulars. In addition I scratched with the point of my dagger a brief letter on the smooth side of a piece of bark my servant had procured me. This I intended to give Choquo, should I be able to make use of him as messenger.

Next morning I procured another interview with the cacique, and represented to him that the horse was a creature requiring special food and treatment at the hands of white men, without which it would become furious and dangerous, and requesting him, therefore, to let it go back to Anilco. To this he did not seem to see any objection, but rather (as I suspected) saw in the proposal a means of lessening my chances of escape, and accordingly (after a brief conference with his friends) he gave the necessary permission. Choquo had by this time become well accustomed to horses, and not a little expert as a rider, and I lost no time in sending him away with the horse and my letter to the Governor. What I wrote was that I regarded myself as a prisoner, and that Choquo would give him all particulars, upon which he could form his own opinion as to what was best to be done; that for myself I did not fear any immediate danger, and no hostile action was advisable for the present, even if possible; finally, that I awaited his instructions, which he could safely entrust to Choquo.

CHAPTER XVI.

Making the best of it—I entertain the Indians—They think highly of me—Return of Choquo—De Soto's advice—Conciliation a failure—I am still detained—Plan of escape—Humiliating failure—Before the cacique—Ordered to be sent to a remoter province.

AFTER the departure of Choquo I made the best of my position, as has always been my wont, and found now, as on every other occasion, that the Indians, rightly taken, are very compatible people, and easy to make friends with. I laid myself out to gain their good will, and especially that of the cacique, and did not find the task a difficult one. He had admired my broadsword in the first few days of my stay with him, and took particular interest in the illustrations I gave him of its use. So I thought it would be a graceful and politic act on my part to make him a present of the weapon. I did so, and the gift pleased him beyond measure, and established between us a cordiality of feeling which had not previously existed. To me the loss of the weapon was of no moment, for I thought that if the Indians became hostile it could serve me but slightly against a great multitude, and if I got safely back to the camp I could easily supply myself with as good a weapon. Besides, I had my dagger, a serviceable two-edged weapon, which I carried inside the breast of my leather jerkin. I had also in my possession a cross-bow, a weapon the Indians had never before seen, and the use of which they did not understand. I surprised and delighted them very much by displaying its power of sending a bolt or a shaft a great distance with much accuracy, and made them acknowledge its superiority, in both respects, over the ordinary bow, by actual competition between them and myself. In such competitions the Indians are always very good-humoured, never manifesting the slightest ill-temper at being defeated, but, on the

contrary, showing a genuine admiration for the victor. But I think, perhaps, I gained more personal respect by the good use I was able to make of their own bows and arrows.

Their bows they make out of dark, coarsely-grained wood, rather hard, and not easy to bend. It is good enough in its way, but inferior to our English yew, or that excellent variety of yew which grows in Ireland. The yew, English or Irish, is lighter and more elastic, and equal in toughness to the Indian wood. Their bows are long, which is a good quality, but too thick and heavy. They are purposely made so, for the Indians use their bows as striking weapons, and very terrible blows I have known to be delivered with them. They challenged me to a competition in the use of their bows and arrows, and were mightily astonished at my ability in their use. Only two or three of their most powerful men were able to send an arrow further than I, and none could beat me in accuracy of aim. They took me for a wonderful man to be able to use their weapons so dexterously, for they did not know of my experience of their use at the time I was the prisoner of Ucita and the guest of Mucozo.

Several days elapsed before I heard from De Soto, and in the interval the cacique had said nothing to me on the subject of the proposals I had submitted to him. At length Choquo returned in company with an Indian from Anilco, who brought a message to the cacique asking him again to visit the camp, and assuring him that he would there be free to go or remain as he pleased. De Soto desired that I might be sent back with the reply, and assured the cacique that, whatever the nature of that reply, there should be no wasting of his territories, nor molestation of his subjects, so long as the cacique remained peaceable. To myself the General had sent by Choquo a letter written with a charcoal point on a piece of skin. He said he intended to exhaust all means of making friends with the cacique, and in no event could he provoke hostilities with him. Fresh complications with the Indians on both sides of the river had arisen, and it was absolutely impossible for him to adopt any high-hand proceedings towards the cacique of Anilco. For my personal liberty he was much concerned, but he had no apprehensions for my

safety. Should the cacique persist in detaining me I was to arrange a plan of escape, and communicate it to him by my Indian servant, and he would send a body of horse to assist me at time and place fixed upon. This was the substance of De Soto's communication.

I lost no time in waiting upon the cacique to again urge upon him the advisability of accepting the proffered friendship of the Spaniards, and in any case to send me back with a reply. He made answer that he could not yet send a definite message, as some of his principal warriors were at a distance, and it would be contrary to custom to decide upon a matter of so much importance in their absence. I judged this to be mere procrastination, for though there appears to be some such custom amongst the Indians, it is not of such stringent nature as the cacique pretended. However, I said nothing of this, but contented myself by observing that such being the case there was no reason for my remaining longer, for he could send his answer later on, or (if he so decided) come himself to receive the Governor's hospitality. But to this the cacique would not agree, and bluntly told me I could not go yet, for the Spaniards were a faithless and cruel people, and I must remain with him to answer for their conduct. This reply put a new aspect on the state of affairs, and put things in their true light. The cacique had no intention of coming to an understanding with De Soto, and probably from the outset his only design was to secure a hostage for the good behaviour of the Spaniards at Anilco. On reflection I could not find it in my heart very blamable on the part of the Indian to resort to a trick of this kind, for it was exactly similar to what De Soto had himself many times done in the course of our march.

There was now nothing left for me but to devise some means of escape, unless I wished to remain an indefinite time in this place. I had the advantage of uninterrupted communication with Choquo, who went to and fro without hindrance, and with him I concocted a plan of evasion. Having arranged all the details, I despatched him to the Governor with a letter of explanation, requesting that, on a day indicated, Choquo should be allowed to guide a body of cavalry to a certain place, midway between the camp and the place of my detention, there to await my appearance.

Having left the cavalry in the proper situation, Choquo was to come on to me, assist me in getting off, and conduct me to the horsemen. Everything was to be done as much as possible under cover of the night, and with every precaution against premature discovery. Choquo returned in a few days' time with the information that everything had been arranged, and that a force of horse was stationed at a safe distance awaiting my arrival. It now only remained for me to evade my watchful hosts and get away as soon and as swiftly as I could.

The house in which I was lodged was of comparatively small size, but ample for my accommodation. It had an upper story, which was usable as a store-room for native produce. The lower floor, like that of most Indian houses, was chiefly occupied by a common hall, from which some smaller apartments branched off. One of these I occupied as my private room. The walls of the house were of trunks and branches of trees covered over with clay. Though I had not been openly treated as a prisoner, there were always some Indians in the central hall of my house, ostensibly as a guard of honour. The doorway of my room was hung with a reed mat, which effectually screened me from the Indians when I retired. There was no other opening in my chamber. My plan was to cut a hole through the outer wall of my room, and through it escape into the open. I made no doubt that once free of the house, without having alarmed my Indian guard, I should have no difficulty in getting clear of the village. Choquo was to meet me at a place beyond the village, and we were then to make our way with all possible speed to where the horsemen awaited us.

Towards midnight, when all was still, I commenced upon the wall with my dagger, a strong weapon of excellent make and material. By its aid I made short work of the clayey part of the wall, and soon pierced it through to the outside. The hole was small at first, but I gradually enlarged it, pushing through it the pieces of clay I removed, so that they should not make a noise by falling inside the room. At last I came to a thick piece of wood placed diagonally in the wall, to avoid which I sought to enlarge the hole in other directions. I found, to my consternation, that a similar beam impeded my progress on the other side,

Those obstructions could not possibly be removed without demolishing the whole side of the house; neither could I cut them sufficiently away without an expenditure of time on the work which would certainly frustrate my escape. The hole was, however, of a good size already, and sufficient, I thought, to enable me to squeeze through with a little effort. I found, on trial, that I could get my head through the opening, and this encouraged me to think that I could pass the rest of my body through. But as I exerted myself for this purpose, I became conscious of a difficulty which I had not anticipated nor provided for. I saw, by the feeble light of the waning moon, that the ground outside was much lower than the floor of the room. Now I was half way through, and tightly jammed in the hole, but could I have touched the ground without, with my hands, there would have been no very great difficulty in accomplishing my exit. As it was, this was impossible, and thus my hands and arms were almost useless in helping me further through the hole, and my feet and legs wholly so. I was only capable of a feeble vermicular motion, which helped me but little in my awkward predicament. Had I but foreseen this difficulty, I could have arranged with Choquo to be outside the house to help me through the hole. But it was too late now. I struggled desperately to extricate myself, but the cross-beams seemed to tighten more and more upon me. I could neither get forward nor backward, in spite of the most desperate efforts. I was bathed in perspiration, and well-nigh exhausted, when I felt myself seized by the feet, and knew that I had been detected by my Indian guards. I had made some noise, sufficient to attract their attention and arouse their suspicions. I was taken like a mole in a ring trap, and that so securely that the Indians were not able to extricate me until some of them went round to the outside of the house and dragged me by the arms through the hole. The Indians hardly ever laugh, but on this occasion they went very near doing so. They took me back to my room without saying a word. Chagrined and exhausted I threw myself on my bed of skins, and soon fell into a sound sleep.

In the morning I was brought before the cacique, who had been informed of my attempted evasion. I

apprehended some rough treatment at his hands, but when brought before him I was surprised and relieved to find him treat the matter with a sort of sarcastic good humour. He pretended to reproach me with ingratitude for the hospitality bestowed upon me, but nevertheless declared he had such a strong affection for me that he could not bear to part with me, at any rate for the present. Having addressed me for some time in this bantering fashion, to the great amusement of himself and his followers, he went on to inform me that he was going to send me to another and remote province, where I should be safely kept and well treated. For me, I said not a word all the time the interview lasted; I felt that the occasion was not one for serious words or argument, and I did not feel equal to joining in the prevailing jocularity. I had not much fear for myself at any time, for it is a rule with the Indians not to punish a prisoner merely for attempting to get away, regarding the desire for freedom as natural in every man and under all circumstances. But I was anxious about Choquo, wondering what he had done when he found I did not join him as arranged. As I was being taken back to my house after my interview, I was relieved to see him standing quiet and unconcerned amongst a group of Indians, for then I knew he was safe and unsuspected. Later on he took an opportunity of telling me of his night's adventures, which simply consisted in waiting for me at the appointed place until long after the time fixed, and then, suspecting that something had gone wrong, returning in the early morning to the village to find that I had been detected in trying to escape.

CHAPTER XVII.

Sent as prisoner to Okanagan—New friends—Native copper—Geographical knowledge of the Indians—Choquo brings news of the army—De Soto dead—Disposal of the body—The troubles of his last days—My anxiety and flight with Choquo—How we lived in the woods—Approach to the great rivers—The army gone westward again.

EFFECT was given to my sentence of banishment that very day. I was sent away from the village in the charge of a band of twenty warriors, all fully armed after their fashion, I being unarmed (except for the dagger which I carried in my vest), but not in any way bound or harshly treated. No objection was taken to Choquo accompanying me. Our march, as well as I could make out, was generally to the north-east. I observed the course as well as I could, thinking that a knowledge of the direction might thereafter be useful to me. We pursued our way for several days through a varied country, mostly uncultivated, crossing one considerable river by means of a raft, and fording several streams. At night we slept in forest clearings, or in sheltered situations on elevated ground. On such occasions the Indians made a good fire, as well for the purpose of cooking the food they had brought with them as for the sake of comfort. One or more Indians always kept watch through the night, and I was at no time permitted to be out of sight. Towards the latter part of the journey we entered upon a vast extent of cultivated land intersected by well-beaten paths, and finally came to our destination, an Indian village called Okanagan. The place contained about forty large houses, some of which were two and even three stories high, the upper floors being reached by stairways or ladders from the outside. Those upper floors were of smaller dimensions than the floors beneath, so that each had a kind of terrace all round it. At a distance those large houses looked like pyramids with flat tops.

The day after our arrival in this village I was introduced to the cacique and his chief men, and courteously received. No doubt my guards had explained to them why I was sent thither, and brought some message from their cacique. I was lodged with the family of a chief in a large house, and well entertained. I was under no restraint, so far as I could observe. I took the earliest opportunity of sending Choquo away to communicate my changed situation to the Governor, telling him to remain at the camp for instructions. Meanwhile, I again resorted to the policy of making myself as agreeable and useful to the natives as I could, and cultivating their good will. I was completely successful in attaining those objects.

The cacique was a man of about fifty-five years of age, robust and powerful, but not tall like most Indians. I soon became great friends with him, and in his company and that of his leading men I greatly improved my knowledge of the dialect of this part of the country. On his part he was greedy for knowledge of the country of the white men, and wanted to know all about their customs, manners, and mode of existence, and also of my own personal adventures. Of all I told him, nothing seemed to entertain him more than the frank description I gave him of my adventures when I was a prisoner in the country of Ucita, and the guest of Mucozo. I gave him an account of the battle in which I had been wounded and made prisoner; told him of my adventure with the panther; of my escape to Mucozo; of the manner in which I had been mistaken for an Indian by my fellow white men, and nearly slain in consequence; of the enrichment of my friend Mucozo on our departure from the town of Ucita; of the various encounters we had with the Indians, and particularly the great battle with Tuscaluza at Movill; and of the tragic death of Ucita. In all my narratives I sought to do full justice to the Indians, both as related to their bravery, and to their moral qualities. This pleased the chief mightily. Of Tuscaluza he had some knowledge, and held him in high esteem, and my account of the battle of Movill most deeply interested him.

In a little time I became quite renowned as a narrator, and, on occasions fixed by the cacique, the people assembled from far and near to hear me tell of my adventures, and

of the great ocean, and the lands of the white men lying on the other side of it. In return for such information I endeavoured to extract as much knowledge as I could about the surrounding regions, their produce and their people. In this way I learnt much; but as to the existence of gold and silver in any quantities I could hear nothing definite or reliable. The people had no ornaments or objects of those metals, and did not seem to know what they were. They possessed some pieces of pure copper in a native state, and at first they thought this was what I meant, until I explained to them that it was another sort of metal I desired. They make little or no use of this copper, and had no idea nor means of fusing it. They possessed some pearls which they used for personal adornment; but here, as elsewhere, they were mostly spoiled by being drilled with red hot copper spikes. As for great cities, they declared there were none in that part of Florida, and they had never heard of such places existing elsewhere. All that I told them about Mexico and Peru, and the cities discovered by the Spaniards in those vast empires, was quite new to them, and not the least entertaining part of my narrations. What they knew they told me without reserve, and from them I learnt that the country to the south-east, from the Rio Grande, was esteemed to be the most fertile and prosperous part of Florida, and that the great Tuscaluza was the most powerful cacique in those regions, and indeed of all Florida. They told me that the land far away to the north-west was inhabited by a people different from all other Indians. Their language was different, and their habits and manner were repulsive. They scornfully spoke of them as being mere wild and homeless savages, who wandered about in search of game and lived very miserably.

I lived many weeks, agreeably enough, among those people without being able to obtain the slightest information of De Soto and the army. I was becoming very restless and uneasy in consequence, and began to fear that I was quite lost and abandoned. I felt sure that by this time De Soto must have moved away from Anilco, and I wondered if he had quite given me up, or was making any effort to recover me. From this state of

harassing perplexity I was one day relieved by the sudden appearance of my trusty Choquo. He had come from the army, and brought most startling news. This was nothing less than the astounding information that De Soto was dead. It appeared that, as I supposed, he had moved away from Anilco, and taken up a more convenient position in a town at the junction of the Rio Grande and another large river coming from the north-west, the upper waters of which we had crossed more than once before the army turned back to re-find the Rio Grande. The name of this town or village was Guachaga, and it was here that De Soto commenced preparations for shipbuilding. Meanwhile he was constantly embroiled with the Indians, in spite of all his endeavours to establish friendly relations with them. In particular, the Indians to the east of the Rio Grande harassed him incessantly, and gave the army no peace day or night. This was the work of Tuscaluza, whose striped skin banner was constantly displayed, and who himself was frequently seen organizing and directing the Indian forces. The Governor became a prey to vexation and despondency on becoming assured that Tuscaluza had formed a larger army than ever, and was busy in uniting all the Indian caciques in a great confederacy against the Spaniards. His dejection induced a fever which became rapidly worse, and carried him off in a few days.

Such, in substance, was the news Choquo imparted to me. He told me further that the Spaniards had tried hard to keep De Soto's death a secret, fearing that the knowledge of it would render the Indians more troublesome than ever. They buried the body secretly at midnight, but they soon perceived that the captive Indians they had amongst them had found out the place of interment. Fearing that, afterwards, the body would be disinterred and dishonoured, the Spaniards determined to dispose of it in a way which should prevent this. They accordingly hollowed out the trunk of an evergreen oak, which is a kind of timber so close and heavy that it sinks in water, and into this cavity they put the body, likewise placing therein some heavy stones, nailing planks over all. Then, in the night, they carried this rough coffin into the middle of the river and sunk it in deep water. Choquo could tell me nothing as to the intentions of the Spaniards as regarded future movements.

He knew that there was a new leader appointed, but nothing else. He had long waited for instructions from De Soto in respect to myself, and as soon as he was assured of his death he had thought it best to make his way to me and let me know everything that had taken place.

I was now in a position of much difficulty. I thought it very probable that the army would abandon the country, now that De Soto was no more, for he had long been the only obstacle to this being done. If so, I should be left alone in this pagan land, with no means of reaching a Christian country. I must, therefore, promptly rejoin the army, or I should be lost for ever.

I resolved to run every risk involved in another attempt to escape. The first steps would be easy enough, for now I was free from every form of restraint, and was in the habit of going about as I pleased, by day or night. It had long been obvious to me that the interest of my custodians in my detention was not very intense. It was probably thought, that at such a distance from the Spanish camp I was safe enough—if, indeed, any thought was given to the subject. I discussed matters with Choquo, and we decided upon immediate flight. He made some simple arrangements for the journey, and retired into the forest. A little before sunset I joined him there, and we at once set out in a rapid march, Choquo leading the way. We carried for our sustenance a quantity of roast maize, and a large piece of dried deer's flesh. For arms we had our bows and arrows, in addition to which I had my two-edged dagger, and Choquo a good steel axe which he had got with the army. During the night we marched with all possible expedition through the forest; and after a short rest and a hasty meal at sunrise, resumed our journey at the same rate until noon. By that time we considered ourselves pretty safe from recapture, even if pursued, which I did not think likely. Having rested for some hours, and partaken of our food, we went on our way, but at a more leisurely pace.

So far, and indeed for all the rest of the way, I had to trust entirely to Choquo for guidance. In spite of the observations I had formerly made, I could not have found my way back owing to the frequent obscurity of the forest, and the devious courses which had to be taken

to avoid impediments and obstructions of one kind or another. Sometimes we made detours to avoid swampy or other difficult places, or to find fordable places in streams which we wished to avoid swimming. Often we had to hew our way through tangled undergrowths of the forests and swamps; for we thought it more prudent not to show ourselves too much in the open country for fear of hostile Indians. But, whatever our windings, Choquo was never at fault, but always able to return to the right course by examining the bark of trees, and making other observations, so that it almost seemed that he possessed a distinct sense of direction. At nights we camped in such dry and sheltered places as we could find, preferring spots clear of trees, because trees are the favourite lurking-places of panthers and other ferocious creatures. We commonly lit a fire as a further protection, as well as for the purposes of warmth and cooking. Choquo was very expert in producing fire in the Indian way. This is done by rapidly twirling between the hands a sharp-pointed stick pressed against a piece of wood or bark, upon which some fine dry moss had been placed. The friction thus created soon heats the wood or bark sufficiently to set the moss aglow, and thus a fire is quickly lighted.

We eked out the food we brought with us by such supplies of game as we could procure by means of our bows and arrows. We shot one young deer, which amply replenished our stock of meat, and lasted us for several days; and we were always able to obtain birds of various kinds, including quail, woodcock, snipe, widgeon, and a bird something like a wild hen. In fact, large and small game were in great abundance, and to be had with very little trouble or exertion. Some of the creatures we killed or saw were familiar enough; others bore a resemblance, more or less, to European animals; others were altogether novel and strange. Amongst the latter was a curious sort of tree-climbing animal, something like a badger, but not so large, having the extraordinary power of grasping branches with its tail, and even hanging head downwards by means of that appendage. A still more wonderful thing about this creature is that it has a natural pocket in the skin of its belly in which it carries its offspring when they are young and helpless. I myself saw this done on more

than one occasion, though the thing may appear incredible. The animal is very prolific, and I have seen ten or a dozen young ones, not as big as a mouse, scramble into the mother's pocket, and there shelter themselves very contentedly, looking out the while. I have also felt and examined the pocket in the dead animal, so that I could not in any way be mistaken about it. This beast is very cunning, and has an intelligent look, like a monkey, but the muzzle is long like that of a fox. When in danger of being captured it pretends death in the most natural way, and will suffer almost any rough treatment rather than show signs of life. I did not care for the flesh, though Choquo praised it. The Indian name for this animal is arrougkoon.

In this way we lived in the woods for some fifteen days, always diligently journeying towards the junction of the two rivers and the Spanish camp, though taking care to run as little risk as possible of being intercepted.

At length, one afternoon, we ascended a high mound which stood in a clearing of the forest, and from its top we saw a large river some twelve or fourteen miles away, which Choquo declared to be the Rio Grande. We were now near the end of our journey, and had to consider what was best to be done. Choquo proposed going forward to reconnoitre, and as this seemed the best thing to be done, I agreed to it, though I was in a state of feverish anxiety to ascertain if the army still remained. Choquo accordingly set out, leaving me at the mound to await his return. It was noon the next day before he reappeared, and then he brought me the sorrowful intelligence that the Spaniards had broken up their camp at Guachaga, and had marched away with all their belongings. He had learnt from the Indians with whom he had conversed, that shortly after the burial of De Soto the Spaniards had held a great conference, after which they hastened their preparations and set out as soon as they could make ready to march—in a westerly direction. To learn that the army had gone clean away was terrible news for me, and not the less overwhelming because I had apprehended it. I had feared that the Spaniards would not remain to carry out De Soto's colonization scheme, but would hasten to leave the country after

his death. As to how they would take their departure, I surmised that they would either go south down the Rio Grande, or retrace their march and endeavour to reach the Bay of Achusi, where they might confidently count upon finding preparations for their reception. But it had never entered into my mind that they would resume a westerly march, the miseries of which they had already experienced, and which, when originally proposed by De Soto, many of them resisted to the verge of mutiny. So utterly incomprehensible did such a movement appear to me to be, that I doubted the accuracy of the information. But Choquo was positive about it, for he had spoken with Indians who had followed the army for many days. I calculated that the army must have set out some three weeks before my arrival at the spot I was then at. It was therefore hopeless to think of following it with a view to overtaking it; and, moreover, Choquo had learnt that the terrible Tuscaluza was hanging on its rear with a large force, and doing all in his power to incite the western Indians against it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

My bewilderment and despair—Courage at last—Thoughts of Aymay—Resolution to search for her—Again in the woods—Reconnoitring a town—A strange discovery—A Spanish cacique—Our hospitable reception.

THOUGH I could not (at that time) imagine what possible motive had induced the Spaniards to venture once more into the boundless western wilderness, the fact that they had gone thither was certain enough, and it overwhelmed me with a sense of desolation, and a feeling of profound despair. I could not but recognize that now, indeed, I was lost for ever in this vast and strange land. All that day and all the night following it, I lay prostrate on the ground, unable to rouse myself from the lethargy of melancholy which had fallen on me. I was conscious of, but indifferent to, the presence of Choquo, who, for most of the time, sat a little way off silently regarding me. At last I fell into a stupor, and had a kind of troubled sleep filled with wild and irrational dreams. But later on I became more composed and easy, and in my dreams conjured up the pleasant image of Aymay, my sweetheart. I saw her, as it were, smiling at me from a distance and beckoning me to her, and in my efforts to join her I awoke to consciousness. It was full day, and the sun was shining brightly. My mind was somehow easier, and I felt more reconciled to my position. The first thing I did was to fall on my knees and utter a fervent prayer to God and the holy saints for protection and succour. My prayer was surely answered, for I rose from my knees feeling more of a man, and full of resolution to bear myself like a Christian gentleman under all afflictions. Choquo had prepared some food, to which we both sat down and made a good meal. This added still more to my rising courage and to the clearing of my mind.

It was now plain to me that some course must be decided upon, and the sooner the better. We could not stop for ever where we were, nor could we live in the forest like wild men. I pondered long upon what was best to be done, and discussed the question with Choquo. We might go back to Okanagan, from whence we had come, with the assurance of a friendly reception from the cacique. But thoughts of Aymay had remained present in my mind ever since my dream, and no plan seemed to me satisfactory with which she was disconnected. Why should I not go in search of her? What preferable course was open to me? As I was condemned for the present to be a wanderer, why should I not endeavour to wander in her direction? I could do nothing better, for nothing better remained to be done. I consulted Choquo, and spoke my mind fully and frankly. Here we were alone and friendless, in the midst of a strange country, and surrounded by tribes, some of whom at least might prove hostile to us, and upon none of whom had we any claims. We must go somewhere away from this region, and might as well direct our footsteps to the country where Aymay was supposed to be as anywhere else. To all this Choquo agreed. Of Quilagha, the place to which Ucita had sent Aymay, he knew but little. He had never been there, nor near it, but he knew its general direction, and made no doubt of being able to guide me to it. We accordingly decided upon making at least an attempt to find it without further hesitation.

I found that the feeling of having a plan to carry out, and an object to attain, were healthy alike for mind and body; and with new hopes and good spirits we set out in search of Quilagha, which Choquo considered was to be reached by following a line of march a little more to the east than the line we should take if we were retracing our way to Okanagan. As before we kept as much as possible to the woods for greater security, as also because of the better chance of securing game. We feared that the evil repute of the Spaniards might be fatal to us if we fell into the company of Indians. I could not very well pass as an Indian on any close inspection; for though being of dark complexion naturally, much burnt by the sun, and dressed after the Indian fashion, I had not the features of an Indian, nor was my skin of the same reddish-brown tinge. I could

not therefore hope to escape detection if we fell in with Indians; and if they proved hostile, Choquo, as my friend and companion, would be equally exposed to their resentment. So we kept in cover as much as we could, and when, in the course of our wanderings, we found ourselves in the neighbourhood of Indian settlements, we lay close until night set in, or made a wide course in another direction.

With such precautions we journeyed on day after day in an easy fashion, living as before, and enjoying a pleasant enough life. We found no stint of food, animal and vegetable, though we wanted both salt and bread. The place of the latter was not badly supplied by a kind of thick spherical root—as large, or larger, than the egg of a goose—which Choquo was able to find from time to time. This substance when roasted was not unlike soft white bread, and had an agreeable flavour. It grew in clusters and patches, and sometimes we found much more of it than we could consume or carry with us. For animal food we could always rely upon our bows and arrows for a sufficiency, and, in addition, Choquo knew various devices for capturing birds and the smaller kinds of beasts. One day I succeeded in shooting an extraordinary bird of great size and peculiar appearance. Its head and neck were bare and warty, like a vulture, but its beak was small and not like that of a bird of prey. The bird I shot must have been nearly twenty pounds in weight, and the flesh, which Choquo assured me I should find good, was, after roasting, very white and tender, and most excellent to the taste. This curious creature is not a bird of strong wing, but its legs are long and strong, and it runs with great swiftness, and is very shy and wary. Choquo thought it wonderful that I should have been able to shoot one in the way I did. The Indians, he said, were in the habit of getting it in two ways: one was to shoot it by moonlight as it roosted on the lower branches of a tree; the other to imitate the call of the female bird, which would be sure to attract any male within hearing, and bring it within bow-shot. By the former method a number of birds might be secured at the same time, for as they roost in flocks, and appear to have their faculties benumbed at night, one might kill them one after another until the whole flock was

destroyed. I was curious to see both those methods put into practice, and was soon satisfied.

One moonlight night Choquo took me to a tree where over a dozen of these birds were roosting at no great height over our heads. We each shot one without causing the others to fly off, and I make no doubt but we might have killed them all if we had cared to indulge in such wanton slaughter. On another occasion (the birds being very plentiful in all parts of Florida) Choquo and myself concealed ourselves behind a fallen tree, from which position he made a peculiar sound, exactly resembling the call of the female bird. This he did with the assistance of a bone which he had taken from the wing of one of the birds we had previously killed, and which he had fashioned to suit his purpose. Almost immediately we heard the reply of a male bird, but a long way off. Again and again the reply was repeated, each time sounding nearer, showing that the male bird was coming towards us at a rapid rate. It surprised me that Choquo did not repeat the call he had made; but I said nothing to him then, believing that he knew his business better than I. He afterwards explained to me that there was always great danger of losing the game by frequent repetitions of the call, for these birds have a very keen hearing, and are quick at discerning the slightest difference between a real and an imitation call. So it was good policy to avoid repeating the call, especially when it had been answered, and there was less necessity to do so. It was fully a quarter of an hour before Choquo gave the call for the second time, and only when it appeared by the responses of the male that it was straying from the proper direction. The call was answered immediately, and very shortly afterwards we saw coming our way a very fine bird with his tail extended upwards and outwards, like a great fan, and his wings trailing along the ground. Choquo made a sign to me to make ready an arrow. I did so, and, bending my bow, let fly at the bird when not more than twenty yards away, striking it full in the chest, near where a large tuft of feathers grew, and killing it instantly. It was a great creature, and could not have weighed much less than thirty English pounds, and the largest we ever killed during our wanderings in the wilderness.

After this manner we passed our time, not lacking abundance of food, and meeting with no mishaps, but always making our way in what we supposed to be the direction of the province of Quilagha. At last we had advanced so far that it became time to consider where we were, lest we might be deviating from the true course. Choquo thought we must now be in a country where some certain intelligence could be obtained of the province we were in search of, and that it was necessary at all risks to make inquiries in order to avoid going wide of our object. We had been about five-and-twenty days in the woods, and though we had not marched in a direct line, nor moved rapidly, we had still covered a good stretch of ground, measured in a straight line.

Thinking and talking in this way, we one morning climbed a rocky and wooded hill, of good height, to secure a favourable look-out. From the top we overlooked an extensive and well-cultivated valley, and we saw in the distance, some seven or eight miles off, one large village, or town, and others of smaller size. This was evidently an important Indian settlement. The town was encompassed by a stout wall, and no doubt was the residence of a cacique of consequence; but whether he might prove hostile or otherwise it was of course impossible for us to tell. After a long and anxious conference, we made up our minds that here inquiries must be risked before we ventured to proceed further. Choquo, it was settled, should go on alone to gather the necessary information, whilst I remained concealed on the hill to wait his return. This was thought to be the best arrangement under the circumstances, for it was natural to suppose that the Indians of this settlement would be less likely to deal harshly with a wandering individual of their own race, than if a white man were found in his company.

Choquo went away on his errand, whilst I took up a position on the hill which enabled me to look down the valley, without unduly exposing myself to observation. I knew I had long to wait, at best, before Choquo could return, if he were able to do so at all, and so I employed the time in observing the country from the position I occupied. The far end of the valley I could not see, because of its extent; but as far as I could see the sides sloped very

gradually up to the highlands on either side, presenting no appearance of rocks or ruggedness of any kind, but quite smooth, and covered with cultivated fields, and natural verdure and trees, to the very top. The shape of the portion of the valley under my observation was that of part of a perfectly regular oval, exactly divided in the middle by a river running through it from end to end. The chief town was on the right or north side of the river, some distance from the water, and on a swelling ground. The smaller villages, of which about half-a-dozen were in sight, were for the most part on the same side of the river. At the place where the town stood the valley might be some five miles wide, but of greater width further on. The whole scene was very pleasant and bespoke a fine country, a good climate, and a peaceful and prosperous people.

Having formed these opinions, and fully satisfied myself as to the features of the remoter country, I next turned my attention to my immediate surroundings. The hill on which I stood seemed to be connected by barren and broken ridges with the heights which curved round the northern side of the valley. It was rocky and bushy for the most part, but in the hollows, where soil had accumulated and moisture had collected, there were groups of good-sized trees, similar to those in the forest. In rambling idly about I found some pieces of stone containing small lumps of a yellow-looking metal. At the first glance I thought this might be gold, but on closer examination, and a little reflection, I saw that the substance resembled the ore which the expedition from the army, when on its way from Cofachique to Cosa, had brought back from the hills whither it had been sent by De Soto on a report of the existence of gold in that quarter. The metal contained in that ore had been proved to be but a fine kind of copper or brass, like gold in colour, but resembling it in nothing else. What I had found was, from its general appearance, the same sort of metal; but whatever it was, it certainly was not heavy enough to be gold. So I threw it away, and continued wandering about the hill in various directions, finding little to interest me, and filled with uncertainty as to the reception Choquo might have met with. Early in the afternoon I gave myself occupation by making a fire in the angle of a couple of rocks in a secluded part of the hill, and prepared some of the food we

had carried with us, enough for myself and Choquo, should he come back dinnerless.

Having made a hearty meal, I went back to my post of observation to wait as patiently as I could for my friend. As the hours went by and the sun commenced to get low I became more and more anxious, fearing that some harm had surely come to him. I pictured to myself how desolate and dreadful my position would be if he did not rejoin me, and I wondered at my fate when at last I should fall into the hands of the Indians, as I must certainly do if I did not die alone and miserably in the wilderness. Then I made up my mind to remain on the hill until noon the next day, so as to miss no possible chance of Choquo's return, for I felt assured he would return to me if he could, and as soon as he could. If he did not appear by that time I might safely conclude he was slain or a captive, and it would then be for me to decide upon what was best to be done.

Shortly after forming this resolution I was thrown into a state of great excitement by observing a party of Indians, a good way off, coming in the direction of the hill. At first I thought of flight, but soon decided to remain still and watch their movements. They came rapidly nearer, and it was plain they were coming to the hill. Watching their every movement, and particularly observing the one who was in advance of the rest, I thought that he bore a resemblance to Choquo. A little time longer I could see it was he and no other. Again I thought of flight or concealment—but only for a moment, for I reflected that if the Indians were hostile they would certainly find me, and again that they could not be hostile because Choquo was evidently leading them to me. I knew very well that no threats or torture would ever compel him to betray me to enemies, and I at once came to the joyful conclusion that Choquo had fallen amongst friends, and was coming to fetch me. So I no longer stood my ground as one uncertain and alarmed, but came freely from my hiding place, and went down the hill to meet the party. At this Choquo commenced waving his arms and shouting in Spanish, "Amigos! Amigos!" to let me know that we were in the hands of friends.

When I had joined the party he had a strange and wonderful story to tell me. He said that long before

he had got to the town he had been told by Indians he met on the way that the name of the place was Cargutah, and that a white warrior was living there, and was a person of great consequence, having married the daughter of the old cacique, and had himself become a cacique next in authority to his father-in-law. In order to confirm this news, Choquo had thought it best to go on to the town. There he found it to be quite true. He had seen and conversed with the Spaniard, who was a gentleman of the army whom Choquo had often seen, though he did not know his name. Finding this to be the case, Choquo did not hesitate to tell him of my being in the neighbourhood, and how it came about. The Spaniard recollected me at once, knew of my being detained by the Indians as a hostage, and of my being carried away to unknown parts. He gave instant orders that I should be brought in and honourably treated, and forthwith despatched Choquo and some Indians in search of me. Great was my surprise at this unexpected news, for the presence of a Spaniard in these parts, living on friendly terms with the Indians, was something I could not have dreamt of. Who he was I could not imagine, and Choquo's attempts to describe him gave me no assistance. However, I lost no time in such idle speculations, but went off with the Indians to the town.

It was long after sunset when we arrived there. I was taken straight to the house of the Spaniard, where preparations had been made for giving me a warm and hospitable reception. The Spaniard I at once recognised as a brave cavalier of the army named Diego de Guzman. After mutual embraces he introduced me to several of the leading Indians, whom he had invited to be present; but the cacique, being an old man, had retired for the night, and my interview with him was postponed to the next day. That night we had a great feast, and after it was concluded De Guzman and myself engaged for hours in a long conversation, in which each related his adventures.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Spanish cacique—His account of the army and why it went west—His Indian bride—History of De Guzman—Gambling propensities—Loss of his clothes, arms, horses, and wife—Desertion and flight to his Indian father-in-law—Refusal to rejoin the army—His position with the Indians—I make compact with him—Aymay to be sought out—Designs of civilizing the Indians and founding an Indian state.

MY own adventures after I left the army are herein sufficiently set forth; those of De Guzman I will now narrate as best I can, not in the order he told them to me, but in what I conceive to be a more concise and convenient form. The circumstances of his desertion from the army (for it was nothing else), and of his residence amongst the Indians, were naturally first entered upon by him; but these I will postpone in order to deal with the news he had to tell me about the army after De Soto's death, up to the time he left it. Immediately on the death of De Soto, the new general, Luis de Moscoso, called a council of the army to consider what was best to be done. All were in favour of quitting the country as soon as possible, and of abandoning as impracticable the colonization scheme of the late leader. The best means of carrying out this decision had next to be considered. Some were in favour of going on with the building of the brigantines and sailing down to the sea by the Rio Grande, by which means Mexico or Cuba might be reached. Others insisted that a safer and speedier course would be to march westward, whereby the frontiers of Mexico could be reached; for it was believed that Mexico inclined northwards a great distance, and that a part of it lay directly west of the place where the army then was. Moreover, reports from various quarters had recently reached the camp of the presence of white men away to the west, and these, it was justly argued, could only be Spaniards

of Mexico. This news was so positive and so confirmed by different Indians, that it was finally resolved to march to the west.

[Here I may interrupt the narrative to say that in after times it came to my knowledge that this news of there being Spaniards far away to the west was true in itself, though misleading in its import. For it was about this time that Cortes, having completed the conquest of Mexico, sent an expedition to the north-west of the country to discover fresh empires to conquer. This expedition, after marching many hundreds of miles without satisfaction, at last turned back, when it had come to a region of such excessive heat that the name of Cali-Fornia, or hot furnace, was given to it. It was of the Spaniards of this expedition that Luis de Moscoso had heard from the Indians, and this it was that made him and others suppose that Mexico and their fellow-countrymen would be found by marching towards the west.]

Before this time, and while De Soto was yet alive, and lay encamped by the Rio Grande, preparing to build the brigantines that were to go down to the sea, there came to visit him the cacique of a place up the river called Cargutah. This chief showed a most friendly disposition towards the Spaniards, and De Soto set great store by the information and advice he gave him. The cacique was accompanied by his daughter, and several of his lords or chief men. De Soto entertained the party handsomely, and ordered every consideration to be shown them. This was during the time I was away, a hostage in the hands of the cacique of Anilco. During the visit, which was a long one, De Guzman fell desperately in love with the cacique's daughter, who was young and lovely, and whose name was Winona. When the Indians returned home De Guzman got leave to go with them on a visit to Cargutah, and he there married Winona, after the manner of the Indians. He brought her back with him to the camp, where they lived together as man and wife. When, after the death of De Soto, the army again set out westward, De Guzman and his wife went with the rest, but on the second day of the march both were missing. Thereupon Moscoso ordered a halt, and directed strict inquiries to be made, for it was

thought possible that De Guzman had been carried off by his wife's people, some of whom had remained with the army to act as guides and interpreters for a short time.

For the better understanding of what follows it is necessary to explain something of the prior history of De Guzman. He was one of those high-spirited and impetuous young Spanish noblemen who had joined the expedition with romantic notions of conquest, glory, and gain. His family had intended him for the church, and he had even been admitted to minor orders; but he had no bent for the ecclesiastical profession, and would at best have made but a bad priest. But when all Spain was excited with De Soto's preparations he abandoned the church, and, through family influence, procured an appointment to the expeditionary army. When he joined he was well supplied with costly raiment, splendid armour and weapons, and three excellent horses. Like most of the young Spanish nobles of the army, he was an inveterate gambler and passionately fond of playing cards. They played incessantly, in and out of season; but in the conflagration of Movill all the playing cards were burnt. However, some parchment was saved from the fire, and out of this they made other packs of cards, which they painted with admirable skill. As they could not obtain a sufficient supply of parchment for the number of gamesters, the packs were lent from one to the other for limited periods. Thus they gambled at every halt, under the trees, in the wigwams, and on the river banks. De Guzman was one of the keenest players; but a run of ill luck had gradually stripped him of all he had brought to the army, or acquired during the expedition. A few days before the army set out on its march under Luis de Moscoso, he—having already lost his clothes, his arms, and his third horse—offered his Indian wife as a last stake, and again lost. He had honourably paid all his other losses, but to his wife he was deeply attached and could not bear the thought of parting with her, even at the price of his honour. The girl was, indeed, extremely beautiful, and only eighteen years of age. During the struggle between honour and affection he put off the winner with excuses, promising that he would give her up in a few days; but this he never did.

On hearing all this, Moscoso thought it possible that De

Guzman had fled away to the Indians of his own accord; but to make quite sure, and also to recover, if possible, so good a soldier, he caused four of the Indian lords, who were with the escort, to be brought before him. These he commanded to take measures for finding the missing Spaniard and bringing him to the camp; otherwise, he said, he should conclude that he had been treacherously carried off, or murdered, and would avenge himself upon them. The chiefs, anxious for their own safety, sent messengers with all speed to their cacique. On their return, they reported that the Spaniard was dwelling with his father-in-law, free from all restraint, but would not return. Moscoso, still professing to be in doubt, was thus addressed by one of the four lords:—"We are not men who would be party to a falsehood and deception, and if you doubt the truth of our messengers, let one of us four go to Cargutah, and if he does not return with some satisfactory proof of the safety and freedom of the Spaniard, then the three remaining in your hands can be made to answer for it with their lives."

This proposition pleased the Governor and his officers, and, after a consultation, Baltazar de Gallegos, who was a friend and townsman of De Guzman, was instructed to write to him, condemning the step he had taken, and exhorting him to return and perform his duties as became a Spanish soldier, assuring him that his wife should be respected, his horse and arms restored, and others given to him in case of need. A message was also sent to the cacique threatening him with fire and sword unless he gave up the fugitive.

When the messenger returned he brought back the letter of Gallegos with the signature of De Guzman written across the face of it in charcoal, as a proof that he was alive and had seen the letter; but he sent not a word in reply to its contents, and the messenger declared that he had expressed no intention or wish to rejoin the army. The cacique, however, sent word that he had used no force to detain the Spaniard, but neither should he use any to compel his return, but would rather treat him with all possible honour and kindness as a son-in-law, and the husband of his beloved daughter. He further declared he would do the same to any white strangers who might

claim his hospitality. If, for doing what he thought was his duty, the Governor saw fit to attack him, he would make the best defence he could, and endure whatever might be the consequences of opposing a power greatly superior to his own. The Governor, thus seeing that De Guzman would not return, and feeling that the cacique was justified in not giving him up, abandoned all further attempts to recover him, set the four lords at liberty, and resumed his march to the west.

Such were the circumstances under which De Guzman had come to live amongst the Indians. He expressed himself as being very well content with the change from civilized to barbarous life, and assured me he had fully made up his mind never to rejoin the army, but to remain for ever with his new friends, by whom he was held in high esteem. He extolled the happiness of life amongst the Indians, free from the cares, restraints, vices, and worthless ambitions of white civilization. On my part I told him of my adventures since I had left the army, and of my search for Aymay. He encouraged me to hope that my quest would not be in vain, and promised that I should have every assistance from his Indian friends and relatives in the endeavour to find her. For myself, he pointed out that I could not, for the present at least, find my way back to white civilization, and he desired that I should marry Aymay, as he had done Winona, and become like him, a great man in the tribe. He said that with the assistance of his father-in-law, who was a powerful chief and much respected for his candour, he had no doubt Aymay could be found, and with her for wife, and himself for my friend, I could be happy and prosperous. Those proposals had attractions for me, but I was not ready to accept them altogether. I was willing enough to recover Aymay and make her my wife, and the simple life of the Indians had wherewithal to commend it to my tastes; but I could not say that I would not avail myself of any chance that might offer to return to civilization, nor could I reconcile my conscience to willingly spending the rest of my days amongst a pagan people, living as one of themselves. All this I frankly explained to De Guzman. He was pleased with my openness, though he made light of my conscientious scruples, being himself one of those graceless

men who have little real respect for divine things, though outwardly conforming to the requirements of religion. As my chances of getting away from the country were very remote and uncertain, I did not hesitate about accepting De Guzman's proposals, reserving my right to go away should opportunity ever offer favouring my return to civilized life.

The Spaniard was very well content to accept me on those terms, which being agreed to, he entertained me with a disclosure of his designs for civilizing the Indians. Most of these appeared to be practical and excellent, but some I considered altogether visionary. De Guzman was, in truth, a man of a sanguine and ambitious disposition. He had conceived the idea of forming a powerful and civilized Indian state, or even great empire, of which he should be the head, and the first of a glorious dynasty of monarchs. It appeared that already he had imparted most of those views to his father-in-law and the leading Indians, all of whom had warmly entered into them. I was willing enough, too, to forward them so far as might be practicable, and to the best of my abilities, for I perceived that if all of them could not be realized, the attempt to do so would be productive of good.

CHAPTER XX.

Interview with the cacique—His appearance—His policy and good sense—My response—I am admitted to the tribe, and made a chief—Indian capacity for civilization—My village and dwelling-place—Aymay to be sought—Embassy to Quilagha—My examination of the valley—Its extent and resources—Native manufacture of salt, pottery, etc.—Ancient civilization—Return of the embassy with Aymay—Our meeting—Her baptism and marriage—Indian hospitality.

IT was not until some days after my arrival that I was able to have an audience with the old chief, because of the state of his health. When I was brought to him I found him sitting in a kind of stool, or chair, with curved sides and a raised back, the whole covered by soft black bear skins. His hair was quite white, but long and thick, and he seemed to be of great age, though in full possession of all his faculties—of the mind as well as of the body—except that his sight was deficient. His face was curiously lined and wrinkled all over, but strikingly intelligent and noble. He was a large-boned man, and—save where the muscles stood out in hard lumps—was almost skeleton-like in his meagreness. When on foot he bore himself fairly upright, and in height was not less than six feet four or five inches. When in his prime he must have been a singularly powerful man, but now he was altogether patriarchal and venerable. In looks he was mild, benevolent, and patient, and these attributes were not belied on closer acquaintance. He explained to me that he and his people belonged to a numerous and widespread tribe or race of Indians who called themselves Cherokees, and he promised that if I joined them I should be highly honoured, and made a chief. He had a high opinion of the wonderful knowledge of the white men, which made them so powerful; and he wished to secure my assistance in imparting that knowledge to his people, so that they, too, might become

powerful and rich like the Spaniards. From all he had seen during his visit to the Spanish camp he was convinced, now that the white men had found their way into Florida, that the Indian tribes could only save themselves from destruction by acquiring the knowledge and imitating the arts of the invaders.

I was greatly impressed with the wisdom and foresight of this venerable Indian, nor did I think to find in a mere barbarian so much largeness of soul, and freedom from prejudices. I now began to understand how it was that he was held in so much reverence by his people, and why even the opinionated De Guzman respected him. On my part I told him, as well as I could express myself, how grateful I was for his timely hospitality, and how glad I should be to repay it by assisting to realize his views. I should willingly accept the generous offers he had made me, as the best way of carrying out his wise intentions, but could not promise voluntarily to remain a member of the tribe, and not avail myself of any opportunity which might be offered of re-joining my own people, though I acknowledged that to all present appearances such opportunity was not likely to occur. The old cacique was satisfied with my speech, and charged De Guzman and the other chiefs to see that I was properly installed as one of themselves. In this way ended the interview, which was curiously solemn and formal, and not without impressiveness.

Thereafter I was treated as a member and chief of the tribe, with entire good faith. At no time did the Indians, high or low, show any jealousy, dislike, or mistrust of me or of De Guzman. On the contrary, they seemed pleased and honoured to have amongst them two friendly white men, who knew so much more than they did, and could teach them many things. In this they showed much good sense; for though the Indians, as a rule, are a fine and brave race, they are ignorant in nearly all the arts, and very backward in civil, political, and military organization. The Cherokees were no great exception, though more intelligent and advanced than most Indians. In themselves, and in their country, they had all the materials of civilization and power, yet they remained in a condition of barbarism for want of knowledge and guidance. Surrounded with rich and abundant natural resources, they knew not how to take

advantage of them. Some progress they had indeed made beyond a state of mere barbarism; but their best weapons, implements, and utensils, were of stone, horn, bone, and wood. Fortunately they possessed the great virtue of recognizing their own ignorance, and I did not at all doubt but that De Guzman and myself could do much to improve a people at once so intelligent, so backward, and so willing to be taught.

In accordance with the order of the cacique, there was given to me a small village, not very far from the chief town, containing five good-sized houses, and a number of huts for the common people. This village, with the lands all round, was bestowed upon me as a kind of lordship, the inhabitants being subject to my authority. I took possession of the largest of the houses, as sufficient for all my requirements, and there established myself, in the Indian way, as best I could, and with far more comfort than I had had the opportunity of enjoying since the sailing of the expedition from Cuba. I did this partly from my own inclinations, and partly because of my hope of recovering Aymay, and having her to live with me as my wife. To endeavour to find her was the next task to which I devoted myself.

It appeared that Quilagha was well known to my new friends, and not very remote. The people were of the same Cherokee race, and their cacique and ours were on friendly terms. It was soon arranged that messengers should be sent to Quilagha to bring back Aymay if she should be found there, and there was no opposition to her coming away. I was myself very desirous of going with the party, but De Guzman and the chiefs would not hear of it, for the reason that I, as a white man, might run some risks, and that in no case could I exercise any special influence with the cacique of Quilagha. So the embassy went without me. However, I got permission for Choquo to accompany it, so that if Aymay was found he might acquaint her with all that had happened since I last saw her; more especially informing her of her father's death, my reconciliation with him at the last moment, and how I had baptized him. The embassy went on its way, and there was nothing further left for me to do in this matter but to wait the event as patiently as I could.

I passed the intervening time in regulating my little lordship, surveying the valley, improving my house and its surroundings, and forming plans for the future. The valley was of great extent—six or seven days' journey, I was told, beyond Cargutah—and nearly of the same uniform shape throughout. Beyond the town it widened out for some distance, and again became gradually narrower. The part furthest away became less and less fertile, and finally merged into a barren region, diversified by woods and swamps, the latter thickly overgrown with reeds, canes, and trailing plants of many kinds. Here, too, the hills on each side drew nearer, and became rugged and precipitous; and it was the common opinion of the Indians that the general condition of that end of the valley afforded a safe protection from hostile invasion. Between that and the other end of the valley there were several Indian towns and villages, and much cultivated land; but the caciques of those places were subordinate to Cargutah, and paid an annual tribute of small amount. The river opposite the chief town was a crossbow-shot wide. It contained abundance of fish, which the Indians caught in baskets, bark nets, and by other devices, in any quantities they wished. In one place there was an extensive bed of fine blue clay, from which the Indians made a few bricks for fireplaces, and a good number of rude pans and other vessels. These they first dried in the air, and then burnt, glazing them over whilst burning with a crystalline substance, the nature of which I did not know. The clay they also used for plastering their timber walls. In another part, not far from the town, I found some of the Indians making salt at a briny spring. This they did by collecting the saline water in large earthern pans, and leaving it to evaporate in the sun, or causing it to do so by slow fires. As the salt crystals collected on the surface of the evaporating water they skimmed them off, spread them out on bark or skins to dry, and then pounded them fine for use. I deemed it a great and most beneficial thing to have always at hand an abundant supply of this useful substance, the want of which had often been so severely felt by us of the army, and been the cause of much suffering, sickness, and death.

My inspection, so far as it extended, of this beautiful

and fertile valley, convinced me that it had at one time, and for a long period, been inhabited by an intelligent and industrious race of natives, who had originally rescued it from the wilderness, and afterwards maintained it in its improved condition. Whether the present inhabitants of the valley were descendants of those former occupants I could not find out, but if so the race must have gone back in civilization. At some parts the river had been embanked in a substantial way, and there were signs of its having been straightened at various places, so as to prevent it from forming swamps and marshes. I wondered much how some of those works could have been done by people who must have been little acquainted with mechanical arts, and only supplied with indifferent tools and appliances. On the whole I was very well satisfied with my survey of the valley. It greatly increased my hopes of being able to do something for those interesting people, and put into my mind many projects for the future.

Though constantly occupied with one thing or another, the time, nevertheless, seemed interminable before any news came of the embassy to the cacique of Quilagha. In reality it was not quite two weeks until the party returned—and returned bringing with them, to my great contentment and joy, the dear one from whom I had been so long separated. The messengers had completely succeeded on all points. They had found Aymay, who, after hearing all that Choquo had to tell her, was willing to return with them; and the cacique, on being assured of the death of Ucita, was willing to let her go, and sent her off with many presents. She had come in a sort of palanquin carried by Indians, and another similar conveyance contained her wardrobe and a number of other things, including the box of pearls which had once belonged to the Princess of Cofachique, who had given it to Aymay at the time she was sent by her father to Quilagha.

It is needless to speak of the joy of our meeting. I found Aymay as lovable and loving as ever, and I thought her more beautiful, if that were possible. She had become more womanly, certainly. On her head she wore a coronet of short red feathers, from which her long black hair descended as low as her waist, being encircled at the

neck with coils of pearls. Her dress was of native cloth of yellow colour, but brightly painted all over in red patterns of somewhat barbaric design. A short kirtle or skirt of soft thickly-pleated deerskin was fastened round her waist by a broad belt of black bearskin. Her legs were encased in loose-fitting trousers, also of fine and soft deerskin, and her small feet were inserted in beautifully-wrought moccasins, curiously embroidered with many coloured grasses. I thought as I held her in my arms and embraced her tenderly, that no woman was ever more beautiful than this Indian girl.

A great feast had been prepared by order of the cacique in honour of Aymay and myself. De Guzman and all the Indian notables attended it. After the feast, and with much ceremony and speech-making, our marriage took place in the Indian fashion. The proceedings were of an elaborate nature, and for the most part incomprehensible to me. So far as I could make out (or afterwards learn), they chiefly had reference to a supposed sale of Aymay to me. The cacique assumed the office of father, or salesman, and I went through the form of buying Aymay from him, whereupon she was handed over to me as my property. I was not quite easy in my mind at taking this innocent young pagan to wife in this unchristian fashion, and had to acknowledge to myself that I was guilty of the sin of yielding to the temptation of carnality. I mentioned my scruples to De Guzman, but he, as usual, made light of them, and for a time was very merry at my expense. Becoming more serious, he ended by reminding me that he was himself in holy orders, and said that if I wished he would marry me to Aymay in proper form. With some hesitation I consented; but first of all I resolved that Aymay should be baptized, so that I might marry her as a Christian woman. Through her early intercourse with me in her father's country, as well as from the instructions she had received whilst staying in the camp of De Soto, she was not altogether unacquainted with the doctrines of Christianity; and the matter being now explained to her, she declared herself very willing to be baptized. Guzman accordingly baptized her first, and then went through the ceremony of marrying us in such Christian form as the circumstances of the

place would permit. I had my misgivings as to the efficacy of the ministration of this ungodly man; but I knew that my own intentions were sincere, and I made a private vow that I would be rightly married to Aymay if the opportunity ever presented itself, and ecclesiastical authority so advised.

Thus it was that Aymay became my wife, to my great actual contentment, and my perpetual satisfaction thenceforth. For never afterwards had I occasion to repent me of having married so good and true a woman as she proved herself. The patriarchal chief adopted her as a daughter, and regarded me as a son, and all the Indians vied with each other in giving us attention and assistance. From them I had already gained much knowledge as to the best mode of life in a country and climate in which I was not born, nor much habituated, and they explained to me many things important for me to know. From them I learned the peculiar cultivation and preparation of the native grain, or corn, which they call "poketaws," but which in Cuba is called maize. They showed me their way of making clothing, various methods of capturing game and fish, etc., etc. Already they had laid up a good store of corn for my winter use, in one of the large houses which had been given to me; also abundance of other kinds of food—as dried meat, and dried fruits, beans, and similar sorts of seeds. All this was necessary at first; but I resolved that afterwards I would do the best I could to provide for myself, and not be a burthen in the future to those good people.

CHAPTER XXI.

Division of labour—Goodwill of the Indians—Possibilities of civilization—Initial difficulties—Cultivation of the soil—Plough and spades—Want of metal tools—Copper abundant—Building a furnace—Making charcoal—The casting—A lucky mistake—Sheet copper—Copper vessels, hammers, rods, nails, and spikes.

IN the course of the many conferences between De Guzman and myself and the leading Indians, it had been settled that he should give his attention to warlike matters, whilst I sought to develop the mechanical and industrial capabilities of the people. There was great scope for each of us in his own department. Of discipline and tactics the Indians practically knew nothing, and therein De Guzman's knowledge and strong military instincts could not but be of great service. In mechanical contrivances and industrial appliances the Indians were in an almost equally primitive state; and though I was no great master myself in any of the mechanical arts, I knew a vast deal more than the Indians, and could teach them many things to their advantage. In addition to what I had learned in Sheffield, we had at Hooton been regularly taught how to make horseshoes and shoe horses, and how to repair accoutrements of all kinds; and what with one thing and another I had a fair knowledge of the work done by forgers, casters, smiths, saddlers, carpenters, brickmakers, and others. Since I had joined the army I had had plenty of opportunities of improving my knowledge of the mechanical arts, and exercising myself in them, as was necessarily the case with almost every member of a force which had to depend entirely upon itself in such matters. So that without being at all a good workman, there were many things I knew, or could do, of which the Indians were totally ignorant. But they were very teachable and anxious to

learn the arts of the white men, and not wanting in intelligence or manual skill.

Under those conditions it was quite possible for a couple of white men, honestly desirous of doing good to the Indians, to bring about great improvements. So we set to work with courage and good will.

To me, the great difficulty was how to begin; but at last I resolved to try to improve the mode of cultivating the soil, holding tillage to be the foremost and most important of all the arts. The soil here, as in most parts of Florida known to us, was naturally rich and generous; but it was the habit of the Indians to exhaust the fertility of one part by a succession of crops and then resort to another, leaving the former place to lie fallow for two, three, or more years. They made little or no pretences of preparing the ground, but just put in the grains of maize in holes made with a pointed stick, or covered over three or four grains with a little heap of earth scratched up around them. I determined to improve upon such methods by introducing the use of the spade, and by means of a plough, if I could make one. I set to work, and with much labour (using my dagger and the poor flint tools of the Indians) succeeded in making some clumsy implements, resembling spades, out of hard wood. I showed the Indians how to use them in turning up the soil and exposing it to the air, explaining to them the advantages of this. They soon learnt how to use the spades, and how to make such implements for themselves; though they seemed to have but a vague idea of the ultimate good which was to come of so much present labour and care. Their belief in the wisdom of the white man was, however, boundless, and they patiently carried out my instructions, and dug over a large piece of ground.

When I came to confront the task of making a plough, I soon saw that I should have much more serious difficulties to contend with. But at last I made one, after many vain trials. Yet the finished implement was but a poor contrivance after all. Being wholly of wood it was both light and weak, having but one handle, with a crossbar at the end, for its guidance. The share was made of the same wood as the spades, further hardened by fire. In actual use four of my Indian servants drew it along, I holding it by the crossbar and directing it as best I

could. My little experience as a ploughman, and the total ignorance of the Indians of such an appliance, made it long before we could do anything effective with it. Nevertheless I persisted, and in the end, with the help of my labourers, succeeded in ploughing a large piece of ground which had borne a crop of maize the year before. I carefully explained to the Indians the great advantages of sowing in the soil so prepared, at the proper season; and they readily accepted my assurance, but still seemed to think that a great deal of trouble was being taken for securing inadequate results. I avow that I was partly of this opinion myself. The country was not populous, and there was abundance of good land capable of yielding sufficient food under the Indian system of culture. My spades and plough involved, in their fabrication and use, a great deal of labour, and I myself did not think that in their defective state such labour would be repaid. But when later on (as will presently appear) we were able to use metal in the making of those implements, the labour connected with them became so enormously reduced, and their usefulness so increased, that no one doubted longer of the advantages of their employment in the tillage of the soil.

In these and every other effort of mine, indoors or without, to civilize and better the condition of the Indians in mechanical ways, I was always impeded and sometimes frustrated by the want of tools, especially hammers and nails. I mean metal tools; for the flint knives, hatchets, and hammers in use were of little service in doing the work I required. The Indians were wonderfully skilful in their use, but such use was exceedingly limited, and could not be extended. Unless I could find something better to work with, little progress could be made, and I could teach the Indians hardly anything they did not know already, and could not do much better than I, with the tools and by the methods to which they were accustomed. Clearly seeing this, I now gave my whole attention to the procuring of metal. The presence of copper in this country has already been mentioned, and in this particular province I found no lack of it. Pieces of it, in a pure state, were very common; but the Indians made little or no use of it, and had no idea of melting it. They would

beat a bit of it into a kind of sharp nail, and, heating the point in the fire, bore holes in pearls and other objects, after many repetitions. This was all the use they made of it. Here, as in Cofachique and Cosa, the natives said that this virgin copper came from some far country to the north. This copper was of the usual red colour, and in that respect different from the kind of fine yellow copper which on some occasions the natives thought we meant when we had inquired about gold. I resolved to try what could be done with the copper. I knew it would not serve for cutting purposes, but I had no doubt of its suitability for hammer-heads, the want of which I felt more than anything else. A serviceable hammer, of good weight, reliable for striking a succession of accurate blows, was what I desired above all things. There was no such reliability in the Indian stone hammers, they being rough in form, insufficient in weight, and very liable to splinter and break in use.

I gave directions for the collection of all the pieces of copper which could be found, and was soon the owner of a large pile of that metal. Meanwhile, I had been busy planning and building a small furnace or oven on the model of those I had seen in use in Sheffield. I built it of the native sun-dried bricks, made of the bluish clay of which I have already spoken, and which was to be obtained in inexhaustible quantities in a valley not far off. I found those bricks when burnt were excellent for standing heat. For mortar I used some of the same blue clay softened by water.

My oven being finished, I left it to dry slowly, and, meanwhile, set about making charcoal. I knew something of the process, having often watched charcoal-burners at work in my own country. In imitation of their methods I directed my Indians to scoop out a hollow place in a clear space in the woods nearest to us. Over this kind of shallow but wide pit I built a semi-circular covering, composed of branches of trees, the whole being made nearly air-tight by means of earth and skins. A trench was cut from the floor of the pit to the outside, sloping upwards to the natural level of the ground, so as to serve as a way into the pit. All being complete, the wood for the charcoal was brought into the pit and piled up in the middle. It was then set well alight, and the entrance

to the pit closed up. In due time the wood within was converted into very good charcoal. Afterwards I was obliged to make another charcoal pit, and again a third, for as my founding operations succeeded and developed, it was necessary to have at least one pit going whilst the others were being emptied of charcoal, or recharged with fresh fuel.

Having now a sufficient quantity of charcoal for the first trial of my furnace (which by this time had become thoroughly dry), I next gave my attention to the making of moulds, to catch and give shape to the metal I might succeed in melting. In this matter I exercised all possible care and forethought. Already I had chosen for the site of my furnace the top of a mound (which I think was artificial), where I had noticed that the ground was composed of a kind of fine stiff sand; for I judged that when it came to the point of casting the melted copper, this would be the best material for moulds, though it was likewise for the better draught of air that I selected the top of the mound. In this ground, close to the furnace, I made my moulds, taking great care in preparing and connecting them, so that there should be no disappointment after so much preparation. One set of moulds I made for hammer heads of different sizes, and others for bars and rods of copper. As to the former, my chief desire was that they should be cast with holes for the handles, for it would not be possible to make them afterwards with our imperfect appliances.

Everything being at length ready I carefully filled my furnace with layers of copper and charcoal, and set light to it. Close to the bottom I had made a hole through which the molten metal should pass into the channels and moulds made to receive it. Meanwhile I kept the hole carefully plugged with a lump of clay, which could be broken away when all was ready. So far I had been guided by such knowledge and observation as I had had in my own country of smelting operations, but I was ignorant of what was the proper time for melting copper. However, I thought I would allow for it in all about four hours at a venture.

Before that time had passed De Guzman, with several of the Indian lords, came to see what was going to happen after so much preparation. The Spaniard hoped that the experiment should prove a success, for he judged it to be of

great importance to all concerned. He had assisted and advised me in all the preparations as far as he could, though he had very little practical knowledge of the work which was being attempted. However, our joint knowledge and combined intelligence amounted to something, and we saw no reason to fear a complete failure in our design. In the event we succeeded very well, and indeed better than we had expected. When the time came for letting the metal run out I knocked away the plug, and out it came in a glowing and beautiful stream, sparkling most brilliantly, and coursing freely along the channels prepared for it, and into the moulds. The Indians, as a rule, are very stolid and unemotional; but now, at the sight of the flowing and sparkling metal, they burst into shouts and cries of admiration, and showed the greatest excitement.

I have already said that the result was satisfactory, and that beyond our hopes. But in one respect the process went wrong, from a cause which I had not foreseen nor provided against. When all the moulds had been filled with the melted copper, I had no means of stopping the further flow of the metal from the furnace. I had never thought of this, though I took care not to forget it on subsequent occasions. The result was that the superfluous metal flowed all over the adjacent ground, in a large sheet of irregular thickness. This gave us a great deal of trouble when we came to detach the castings from the sheet; but we afterwards found that the mistake made was a fortunate one, for out of the sheet we were able to make, by beating the metal on rounded wooden blocks, a number of vessels which served very well for bowls, basins, cups, and cooking pots, greatly superior to the wooden and earthen pots hitherto employed by the Indians for boiling meat, maize, and other food. Within a short time copper vessels were in pretty general use, and much sought after, not only by our people but by neighbouring tribes.

This was an unexpected result of my founding operations, but my chief object had been to fabricate hammer heads, and next, rods and bars of copper to make nails and spikes. In these objects I had fully succeeded, and I now found myself the happy possessor of a number of good hammer heads, rather roughly cast, it is true, but capable of being reduced to shape and smoothness by grinding. I was

particularly gratified with my success in securing good, clear holes for the handles, which were soon fitted to them. Then at last the Indians realized the advantages I conferred upon them by placing in their hands a tool the like of which they never before possessed. Their gratification was enhanced when I showed them how nails and spikes could readily be made from the copper rods, and the numerous uses to which they could be put. The moulds for these rods, I may observe, I had made by the simple process of pushing into prepared ground smooth reeds and canes of different thickness, and then carefully withdrawing them so as to leave a perfect hole. Afterwards I greatly improved the form of hammer heads by using as models for the moulds those heads already cast, which we had reduced by grinding to proper shape. But in every successive founding I was able to make some new improvement of one kind or another.

CHAPTER XXII.

Progress with the Indians — Their intelligence and docility — More copper foundings—Traffic with neighbouring tribes—More mineral discoveries—Bronze and iron—Metallurgic difficulties—Old armour brought in—Saw making—Sledges and carts—Making pottery.

OUR fame was now great in the land. The Indians had practical proofs of the knowledge and cleverness of their white friends. They were sensible of the good we had already done them, and believed that still greater advantages would come from our presence among them. I confess that, on their part, they surprised me with their quickness and intelligence in learning the lessons I had taught them, and by the manner in which they improved upon them. For I soon found that they could work in copper, and make better use of the implements produced therefrom, than I could; and I was very well content that this should be so, for my only ambition was to be their teacher, as far as I could, in useful arts, and I had no desire to be a mere workman.

Other foundings of copper followed the first, and some of these were mainly carried out by the Indians themselves. Soon we began to run short of metal wherewith to pursue our work. A sort of trade had sprung up between us and neighbouring tribes, whereby we profited greatly. Our manufactures being highly prized and in great demand, we got in exchange for them great quantities of skins and furs, dried meat, and produce of various kinds, as well as many pearls, some rare stones of various colours (which appeared to be of value), and small quantities of what was certainly gold. In short, the friendly Indians brought us whatever we showed a desire to take in exchange for our implements and utensils of copper. By my advice, therefore, it was made known to our customers that we desired to procure copper in its native state, and in a little time

a large quantity of that metal found its way to us, and for a period supplied our wants. But I knew very well, from what I had always been told, that those pieces of copper came from a distance, in a casual sort of way, and not in the manner of regular trade. So I judged that very soon we should again be short of copper for our furnace. I then bethought me of the metal resembling gold, but which proved to be only a kind of copper, which I had seen in the hill when Choquo and I first came to the valley; and I resolved to explore the country in that direction, which was north-east of the town. I accordingly organized an expedition for that purpose. I took with me Choquo and five other Indians, a stock of provisions, our usual weapons, and several bags made of skin to carry home anything of value we might find.

When we got to the hilly country I very soon picked up some of the ore with the yellow metal embedded in it, and showing it to the Indians, commanded them to disperse themselves as much as they could, and collect all they might find of similar pieces. Before the end of the day they had collected much more than we could carry away that time, and there was no doubt that this mineral abounded in those regions in large quantities. My men also brought me some heavy pieces of stone to show me. I considered those substances attentively, and made out that they were ores of more than one kind of metal. One sort showed bits of silvery-looking metal, which I could easily scrape with my knife, and which I thought must be of the nature of tin or lead. Another sort was very dark and hard, and this I supposed might be an ore of iron, though I could not then say for certain.

For three days we worked in the hills, collecting a great quantity of what I believed was copper ore, and a little of the other and more doubtful substances. We then filled our bags and baskets with as much as we could carry away at once, and, leaving the rest for another time, returned home with our booty. I lost no time in trying to find out the nature of the minerals we had gotten. I put the yellow ore, with a little of the white, into the furnace, and let the whole burn for four or five hours. At the end of that time the metal in the stuff had melted out, and the earthy dross floated on the top of it. Carefully drawing off the

metal and running it into moulds as before, I found, on testing the castings, that this new metal was much harder than the copper we had been making, though more brittle. It was, indeed, a kind of brass, or bronze. The tools made from it could take an excellent cutting edge, and were therefore useful for many purposes which copper did not well serve. In fact, the Indians were able to give some blades made of it an edge keen enough to shave their heads with, and thenceforth they used razors of this metal for that purpose, in lieu of the sharp flint flakes they had formerly employed, but which did their work very badly. So I was now convinced that, whatever might be the exact nature of the metals I had found, one was some kind of copper and another some kind of tin, which, fused together, made a sort of bronze, having many useful qualities. I thought this a most important discovery, and so it proved to be, for we were able to make from the mixed metal greatly improved tools and weapons, and many kinds of things.

I next set to work to find out the nature of the substance I supposed to be iron ore. I put it in the furnace, but though I left it there as long as the heat lasted to the full, I could not get it to liquefy. But I got some of it in a red hot state, and, hammering it vigorously on my rock anvil, beat out of it a great deal of earthy matter. By doing this several times, I was able in the end to reduce the substance to a kind of impure iron, though I had not been able to liquefy it by such simple methods and insufficient heat as I was able to apply to it. Here, then, was another discovery, not less important than the last one. In a little time we were able to forge it into hammer and axe heads, and a variety of other things, harder and much more enduring than anything of the kind we had made before; but I found that for small and slender things it was not so useful as the bronze, being coarser in grain and more liable to break, which I supposed to be owing to its want of purity. Having now abundance of metal of one kind or another, and useful tools to work with, and having moreover a number of willing workmen every day improving in knowledge and skill, I set about turning some of the large empty houses in my village into workshops. I also set up a smithy in the village, where the metal was

wrought into more tools (at first our chief want), as well as implements and weapons of all sorts.

The Indians, high and low, were pleased beyond measure with the great things we had done for them, and we were now able to show them how to do many things which before they had not dreamt of attempting. In the woods round about them were fine trees, the timber of which was fit for many purposes; but of these they had heretofore made but small use, owing to the great labour of felling, and of afterwards dividing and shaping the wood into beams, planks, and sticks. Now, by means of the axes of iron and bronze which we gave them, they were able in a few hours to cut down trees which before could only be brought to the ground by many days of labouring with flint hatchets, assisted by fire. Nay, they could now courageously attack great trees which, on account of their largeness, they durst not before as much as think of felling. They could now also, by the use of wedges and hammers, divide the fallen trunks with comparative ease and expedition, and trim the pieces into suitable shapes with their bronze or iron axes.

Those facilities wrought a great change in their habits, especially in their mode of building their houses, and in the arrangement and furnishing of their interiors. Heretofore their houses (as in all other parts of Florida) may be said to have been destitute of furniture or fittings of any kind. Now tables, chairs, couches, bed-frames, shelves, bins, boxes, and so forth, began to be common, and were much sought after by the Indians. The house belonging to the cacique, that occupied by De Guzman, and the one belonging to me, were the first to be supplied with such conveniences, and also with doors and partitions dividing the different rooms one from the other; and in this way an example was set to the Indians, which they were not slow in following. My own house was little, if at all, inferior, without and within, to the house of an English yeoman or well-to-do farmer. Without, it was substantial and weather-tight, being partly built of sun-dried bricks and partly of timber, thickly plastered with tempered clay, with a well-secured roof of bark. The upper story was used for its original purpose of a storeroom; but I had replaced the somewhat treacherous floor of reeds by one

of split timbers. With like materials I had divided parts of the great lower hall below into a number of rooms, and at one end of the hall I had built a good fireplace, with a chimney to carry off the smoke—a contrivance which excited the wonder and admiration of the Indians, and mightily pleased my wife. The fireplace and chimney I made chiefly of dried bricks, and these soon became hardened by the fire, and served their purpose very well. In the matter of soft furs for couches and seats, and in skins to hang round the walls and lay on the floors, we enjoyed advantages which no English yeoman possesses. And in all minute particulars of domestic comfort I was at pains to adapt European ideas to local facilities, so as to make Aymay as happy as possible in her home surroundings. In this I am sure I succeeded; which was to me but another proof that human nature is the same all over the world, and that even Indians who have been totally unused to comfort, cleanliness, and decency in domestic life, value them just as highly as Europeans, when they come to know them.

What was rough and inconvenient in the fittings and furniture I had been instrumental in introducing into the Indian dwellings was in the main due to one want, namely, a saw to cut wood evenly and smoothly. This deficiency I saw no possible means of supplying. The Indians used a large fragment of jagged flint for roughly sawing in two small pieces of wood, with immense labour. I had improved upon this by introducing blades of bronze, notched on one side; but this was still very remote from a saw capable of cutting planks. Bronze was unsuitable for making a thin blade, sufficiently long and broad for such a purpose, and our iron was equally unsuitable, because of its inferior quality and the difficulty of working it. I had quite abandoned hope of being able to make a proper saw, until chance put into my hands the very requisites I needed for the purpose. I have said that the Indians had been encouraged in the habit of bringing in anything which might in any way be useful to us. One day a party of them brought to us an old battered cuirass of steel, which had evidently once belonged to a trooper of the army of De Soto. It had probably been abandoned as unserviceable, or it might have been part of the booty

taken by the Indians in some encounter with the Spaniards. The Indians who brought it to us stated that they had obtained it from Indians of a distant tribe in the course of traffic, and had brought it to us, thinking that it might be of some value to the white men who thought so much of metals of all kinds. In this they were not mistaken, and I at once took possession of the prize, handsomely rewarding the Indians who brought it, and encouraging them to look for things of a similar sort.

I took the old cuirass to our smithy and there flattened it out, and cut from it several strips of sufficient length for saw-blades. These, with much trouble and long labour, I succeeded in notching, so as to form teeth, and so converting them into very passable saws. The blade we then fixed firmly in a kind of frame-handle, in such a manner as to secure a strong tension on the steel strip, so as to prevent it from bending or breaking. The complete contrivance gave us a most serviceable saw, the utility of which I was able to demonstrate, to the admiration of the cacique and all the Indians. The spare pieces of the cuirass I converted —according to their size—into short sword-blades, daggers, knives, and spear and arrow heads.

Knowing that the Spaniards, from one cause or another, must have left behind them many pieces of armour, broken weapons, and other objects of steel or iron, I constantly urged the Indians to inquire for such things and bring them to us. This had the result of procuring us, from time to time, many such articles, which we found very useful for a great many purposes, civil as well as military, there being scarcely the smallest portion of them of which we could not make some use.

We had now frequent recourse to the hills for the purpose of procuring materials of various kinds. The mere work of transporting these became very laborious, and required a great number of labourers. At first we carried away what we required in skin bags and in baskets, but soon I began to feel that a better means of transport was absolutely necessary. I observed that on some occasions the Indians would get a large branch of a tree, and covering the bushy part with a skin, would deposit thereon their full bags, and drag the whole along with comparative ease. With a view to improving upon this idea I had a kind of sledge made,

running on two long pieces of hard wood secured to the bottom. The sides and ends being properly railed, the whole resembled a long and narrow cart without wheels. This kind of carriage we found a great convenience, as, while it lightened the work of conveyance, it enabled us to bring home larger quantities of materials. When empty, the sledges could readily be taken up the steep slopes of the hills, and when full the descent was easy enough. On the level ground, however, the task of dragging the sledges along was more difficult, and again I set my wits to work to find a remedy for this. I found one in the expedient of putting wheels to our sledges, or similarly constructed vehicles. The wheels we made solid, and without spokes, each being composed of two or more pieces of thick hard wood, firmly joined together by bronze pins and clasps. To the broad edges of the wheels so made we fastened plates of copper, to make them less liable to wear and injury. These waggons acted very well on the level ground, but we could not take them up the hills. So we continued to use sledges on the rocky and precipitous ground, reserving the wheeled waggons for the more level country. In accordance with this plan, we formed a sort of depôt for our minerals at the foot of the hills. Here the sledges discharged their loads, and the waggons were laden up in their turn to complete the transportation. After this there was no further use for the bags and baskets, except for the collection of the minerals we were able to procure in the hills.

In the midst of the many undertakings constantly calling for my attention, there had long been in my mind the thought of making a potter's wheel. This, in our improved state, I now considered a practicable thing, which, if successful, would be of great benefit to the community. The native pottery was of the rudest and most clumsy sort, being simply fashioned by hand out of lumps of wet clay. The clay itself was of excellent quality, and stood fire well, but the vessels made from it were unshapely and in many ways defective. Having well reflected upon the task and how it was to be carried out, I resolved to attempt it. I remembered the general structure of potters' wheels from what little I had seen of them in my own country formerly, and I resolved upon trying to make something similar. In the course of my attempts I found there were many little

details which I did not remember, or had never observed, and these I could only discover and deal with as I went along. After many mistakes and some partial failures of a discouraging nature, I did at length succeed in carrying out my intention of establishing a potter's wheel and its necessary appliances. In one of the disused houses of the village I had an upright post firmly fixed in the ground. Upon this I placed a small horizontal table, revolving on its centre by means of a bronze pivot and socket. Some distance off I set up a large upright hand-wheel, supported by and revolving between two posts. Round the broad rim of this wheel there passed a band of stout hide, which also went round the under part of the table, so that when the wheel was put in motion by one of my Indian workmen the table commenced to revolve. The whole worked perfectly at last, and gave me much satisfaction. The making of the wheel was the most troublesome part, for having to be light as well as of good size, what I had before done in making wheels for the sledges and carts was of little help to me when I came to make the large, light wheel, for this was not of solid wood, but a spoked wheel of altogether another kind. Nevertheless, it turned out in the end a good piece of workmanship, and, in common with the rest of my pottery machinery, served excellently well for the purpose for which it was intended. For in the course of two or three days' work at the table, and experimenting with lumps of wet clay, and smooth sticks and bronze blades for shaping the clay, I was able to make pots, and bowls, and cups, and several kinds of circular vessels of good form and finish. These I first had dried in the air, and afterwards baked by fire, and glazed in the native way. Some of the best of my productions I gave to the cacique, or distributed amongst the chief Indians, who received them with many expressions of admiration and pleasure. I taught some of the Indians this (to them) new method of making earthenware vessels, which indeed was simple enough and very apparent. I was soon able to leave the manufacture entirely in their hands, confident that in this, as in other things I had shown them, they would soon excel me in manual skill and dexterity, and in ingenuity also.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Corn grinding—Native method—Construction of a mill—setting up a grindstone—Its great usefulness—Native weaving—Cotton cloth—Quilted armour—De Guzman disciplines the Indians—Their arms and armour—Fortifying the town—Brick making—Building a town wall.

THE success I had in making a potter's wheel, and in other inventions, emboldend me to try and improve the Indian mode of grinding their corn, which they call maize. This corn makes very excellent food in all forms of preparation, which are chiefly three in number—boiling the grain, baking or roasting it, and making it into cakes by first crushing it between two stones. It is best in the latter form; but the grinding being a slow and laborious operation, the Indians chiefly boil or roast it. In grinding it they place successive handfuls of grains (sometimes boiled first) on a long flat stone, which by use becomes concave, and this is an advantage in the process. Those grains they then roll over and crush with a long rounded stone, which they work backwards and forwards with both hands. In this way they produce a coarse flour; or, if water be added during the process (as is often done), a kind of thick paste or dough is formed. This dough—or dough made by moistening and kneading the flour—is made into round cakes, thick or thin, which are baked on a hot stone, or in hot ashes, and when done make very good and palatable bread, especially when eaten fresh.

I saw very clearly that it would be no difficult task, under our improved circumstances, to find a means of grinding the corn more quickly, more thoroughly, and with less labour. Having well reflected on the European modes of grinding corn, I resolved to fashion and set up two circular grinding stones, one working upon the other. I accordingly procured in the hills a couple of the most

suitable stones I could find, of tolerable hardness, and flat and thick.

Upon these I set my Indians to work, instructing and assisting them in bringing the stones to a circular form, and in piercing each with a central hole. The work was long and laborious, but it was accomplished at last as I desired. One of the stones I fixed immovably on a thick tree stump. From the centre of this there projected a strong bar of iron, secured in its place by means of molten metal. This served as a pivot for the top stone to revolve upon. The opening in the top stone was so enlarged and arranged as to permit of corn falling through it without interfering with the steady revolution of the stone round the iron axle. This—omitting needless description of minor details—was my corn mill, and very well it served its purpose. I had established it in the pottery shed, with the idea of causing the top stone to be set in motion by means of a band passing from the pottery wheel round the rim of the stone. But this I found would not answer, because at the first trial the pottery wheel, being of light construction, was broken in consequence of the weight of the stone. However, I got over this difficulty by arranging a long horizontal bar of wood upon the top stone, in such a way that an Indian pushing at each projecting end of the bar could set the stone in motion. It was altogether a rough contrivance, but immeasurably better than anything the Indians had previously employed for the purpose. When at work the corn was poured into the opening in the top stone, and quickly came out as well-ground flour at the circumference between the two stones, and fell in a continuous shower upon mats spread out to receive it. Thenceforth there was no lack of maize-flour, and no stint of cakes made from it.

Many other improvements and new inventions were introduced by me for a great number and variety of purposes. I constantly found that one improvement suggested another not before thought of, and that each additional improvement supplied new means and facilities for effecting further inventions. An early felt want was that of a grindstone to give shape, finish, and sharpness to our metal manufactures after casting, or when they had lost their edges or points by use. In the earlier stages of our industrial development it was idle to think of setting

up such a stone, and we had to do such grinding work as was absolutely necessary by rubbing our articles on such flat stones as we could find. Now the setting-up of a grindstone had become quite practicable, and the necessity for it had become greater than ever. Profiting by our millstone experiences, we lost no time in cutting and properly adapting a block of hard coarse stone to serve as a grindstone, and this we soon had in position and good working order. No one who has not felt the want of a grindstone can have any just idea of the great utility of this humble mechanical contrivance. In circumstances such as ours it is second to none in importance. It was useful to us in a thousand ways, and it enabled us to do things we had not been able to do before, or only imperfectly. For instance, in our saw-making we had great difficulty in cutting the teeth; but by a skilful use of the grindstone the work was much lessened, and we could make better saws with greater ease.

I had tried many things and succeeded, well or ill, in most, but there was one I had never the confidence to attempt. This was weaving cloth. The Indians make cloth from the fibres of a kind of cotton, which they get from the pods of a shrub growing mostly in moist places. I had heard of this cloth in England, and had seen it in Spain. In Europe they get it from Egypt, or some parts of the East. It is spun into threads and woven like linen or woollen stuff. The Indians of Florida, having twisted the fibres into threads, convert them into cloth by a slow process of weaving. The spinning and the weaving are done in very clumsy ways, and by means of very rude contrivances. Improvements could, no doubt, be readily introduced by anyone possessing some knowledge of the manufactures. But this was not my case, and, to speak truly, I shrunk from the task through not having a taste for it, and having a great many other things to do which had more attraction for me. I saw, moreover, that to do any practical good I should have to invent and construct machinery of a more delicate and complicated character than any I had hitherto essayed, and I did not believe that it was possible to do this in our circumstances. So I left those branches of native industry untouched, and the more readily because the matter was

not one of great or urgent importance. The Indians had all the clothes they required, whether for summer or winter use, including abundance and great variety of skins, which they dressed and prepared admirably, with or without the fur or hair, and fashioned into such articles of clothing and covering as they thought fit. There was, therefore, no necessity to spend time and labour in trying to improve their methods of weaving the cotton.

But there was one use they made of it which attracted the interest of De Guzman and myself. They were in the habit of making quilts of the raw material by stitching layers of it between two pieces of their native cloth. This made a very warm covering for night use, and already we were acquainted with its occasional employment for defensive purposes. A thick well-made quilt of this kind cannot be penetrated by an arrow under ordinary circumstances, and even affords some protection against a spear thrust, or a blow from any kind of weapon, sharp-edged or otherwise. In the course of the campaign with the army both De Guzman and myself had often witnessed this, and we now determined to provide some, at least, of our troops with this kind of body armour. We had coats made of it in two pieces, one for the front and the other for the back, reaching from the throat half-way down the thighs. The coats so made were without sleeves, and could readily be thrown over the head and put on. At the sides they were laced together by means of thongs of skin. On the whole they resembled strongly a herald's coat, and were not at all unbecoming in appearance, or disfiguring to the wearer. All the more vital parts of the body were protected by them, without the warrior being the least encumbered or inconvenienced by their use or their weight. Having satisfied ourselves as to the advantages of this kind of armour, we had a great number of coats made for the use of our soldiers when required.

I have hitherto spoken mostly of my own contributions to the advancement of our Indian friends; and it is now time I should do justice to De Guzman, and speak a little more fully of what he had been doing in his department. He had been far from idle. In addition to deeply interesting himself in my work, and being constantly ready to advise and assist me in all my undertakings, he had

laboured most zealously in the military organization of our little kingdom, and in the drilling and disciplining of the Indians. By dint of hard work (in which I assisted him on occasions) he had succeeded in forming a fairly efficient military force of fifteen hundred men. This small army could execute with precision many manœuvres and exercises by word of command, and its movements were directed by captains and other officers carefully instructed and trained by De Guzman, partly assisted by me. De Guzman was incessant in the work of drill and movements, and not a day passed without parties, large or small, of the Indians being out on the plains exercising. The results of so much care and labour were manifest, for no body of European troops could do better in matters of drill and all kinds of military evolution than this Indian force of De Guzman's training. Nor were our forces at all badly armed. They had been taught the use and the manufacture of the crossbow, and one of the companies of one hundred men were made as skilful in its employment as any Europeans. By means of our metal-founding and smiths' work, the army was furnished with a good supply of spears, axes, and swords, and more were being fabricated every day. These weapons were, however, mostly of bronze, for the reasons already stated; copper was employed for spear and arrow heads, and also for the heads of the crossbow bolts. Out of the pieces of old armour we had been able to procure, we had made a few swords, some daggers and knives, and some spear and arrow heads; but all such weapons of steel were reserved for a picked body of two hundred and fifty men, instituted by De Guzman as the king's, or cacique's, bodyguard. Some of these we had been able to furnish with helmets, or casques, made out of pieces of copper beaten into shape and riveted where necessary. Accoutred in this way, with bright copper helmets, quilted armour, and good weapons, the guards presented a very martial appearance, and being all Indians of rank and high spirits, the guards alone would constitute a formidable force in case of war. Indeed, the entire army was an incomparably superior force to any that existed or could be mustered in Florida, though, of course, still inferior to the better supplied troops of European countries.

Nor did De Guzman confine his work as military

organizer to the raising of an efficient army. He had from an early date busied himself with the fortification of the capital. The town, like all of any consequence in Florida, had been surrounded by a wall built in the usual Indian way. The skeleton, as it may be called, of all such walls consists of a triple line of rough palisades. The middle row stands upright, the others incline towards it at the top. The three rows are connected together by cross-pieces of wood bound by hide thongs, bark ropes, vine stalks, and such other substitutes for cordage as the country produces. The skeleton wall so formed is next filled up, and plastered thickly over, with tempered clay mixed with straw, reeds, or other binding material. Thus the whole structure may be correctly called a clay wall with a timber interior, broad at the bottom and gradually tapering towards the top. The height is rarely more than twenty feet. This is a good wall enough in Indian warfare, but more than once in the course of our fighting in Florida, it was shown that the best of such walls were of no avail against an attacking party armed with steel axes. At Movill our men soon demolished the clay facing of the town wall, and then made short work of the interior parts, despite the desperate courage of the defenders.

De Guzman resolved to have a wall of harder and more solid materials. As it was impossible for us to square enough stones for the purpose, he decided, on my advice, to try bricks. The Indians were not altogether strangers to brickmaking. They were in the habit of making a few from the blue clay already mentioned. They did so by cutting out square or oblong blocks and letting them become sun-dried. To introduce the ordinary brick-moulds I had seen used in England was no great difficulty. These were merely boxes without bottom or top, into which the tempered and moist clay was pressed until it filled up the interior. Then being carefully shaken out, the soft brick was gently laid on a level place to dry, after which it was baked or burnt. I had a number of those boxes made, and with a very little practice the Indians soon became expert in their use, and produced large quantities of brick. These, when thoroughly air-dried, I placed in stacks, intermingled with charcoal, and burnt or baked them slowly. The bricks so made of the peculiar blue clay

I have already mentioned were exceedingly heavy, and of a hardness so extraordinary as to be almost like iron. No material could be better suited for building a defensive wall.

A want had still to be supplied before we could commence building operations. We must have mortar for such a purpose, and of this the most important ingredient is lime. I accordingly made an excursion into the hills in search of limestone. In one place, where the hills spread out into a sort of lofty down or heath, I found several weather-rounded blocks of a greyish stone, which I recognized as a species of limestone. On burning some pieces of it I found it was true lime, and of good quality. I at once had a pit dug to form a lime-kiln, and this being completed I set a body of Indians at work to burn lime pursuant to my instructions. The lime when made was taken home by our sledges and carts, and stored in a large shed until required for use.

Having now all we wanted for the purpose we had in contemplation, the work of building the town wall was commenced. We retained the existing wall as a sort of backing for our bricks, and because its demolition and replacement would have involved too much labour, great delay, leave the town exposed for some time, and too severely tax our resources in brickmaking. We considered that a good outer facing of bricks would avoid all those inconveniences, and serve every practical purpose. Large quantities of materials having been got ready, we set some two hundred Indians to work upon and in connection with the wall. These were for the most part experienced workmen, who had been under our training for a long time. The building of the wall progressed apace under the daily superintendence of De Guzman and myself, and long before it was finished it was the opinion of all that it would make the town perfectly impregnable to any attack whatsoever by native forces. The brickwork was carried right up to the top of the old wall and a little beyond, where it formed a castellated parapet. The top of the old wall remained as a platform from which the defenders could project their arrows or other missiles. At a little distance from the outside of the wall De Guzman had a fosse excavated, the inner edge of which he caused to be guarded with a fence of sharp-pointed stakes having an

outward inclination. He had intended to fill this fosse with water, but this he found he could not do, as the ground was not favourable for a flow of water.

Very great was the pleasure of the old cacique and all the Indians at those changes, which added so enormously to the security of the town. And truly there could not be at that time in all Florida any native place so strong as this had become, or even to be compared with it for strength and security. On the completion of the work, De Guzman established a regular service for the defence of the wall and for sentinel duty. There seemed little necessity for this, but he had the idea that it conduced to the better training and discipline of the army to employ it in this way. So the wall, at various points, was never without guardians by day or night, and the Indians were well practised in manning it as if for defence.

Heretofore the town had but one gate, but De Guzman had another made at the opposite side. Both were well protected by flanking buttresses of brick, and by solid doors of planks of the evergreen oak. The approach to each was over the fosse, by means of a light drawbridge, which was, with uniform regularity, drawn in each night and replaced each morning. This, too, was in accordance with De Guzman's plans for establishing everything on a strict military basis, and not doing things by halves. Certainly his methods made it well-nigh impossible for an enemy to take the town by surprise, if anything of the kind should be contemplated. At night it was not only cut off from access from without, but in addition well watched from the ramparts. In the daytime the drawbridges were down, but each gate had its guard, and sentinels went their rounds on the wall. I thought within myself that this was very fine playing at soldiers, but wholly unnecessary, though I acknowledged that all those routine military duties helped to make the Indians better soldiers. They themselves seemed pleased with them, and not a little proud of their newly-acquired military knowledge and proficiency. Indeed, I do not think that the people of any country would make better soldiers, under proper training, than the Indians of Florida, who are naturally brave and warlike.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Capturing escaped horses—Their equipment and uses—Familiarising the Indians with them.

ONE day during the progress of the town fortifications Choquo and myself accompanied a party of Indians in one of the excursions we were in the habit of making to the hills to procure further supplies of metals and limestone. Having collected as much as we desired, we commenced our homeward journey towards the close of the day. Arriving at the foot of the hills we transhipped our loads, as was our wont, from the sledges to the carts, and then encamped for the night. In the morning one of our party, who had gone out early to shoot game, came running back breathless, with a strange account of some monstrous beasts of a ferocious aspect he had discovered in the plain, the like of which he had never before seen. As I could not conceive what manner of creatures these could be, I determined to go in search of them and ascertain for myself. I accordingly mustered the Indians, and bidding them take their weapons, set out in quest of the animals under the guidance of the Indian who had seen them. After walking about a mile, observing proper precautions, during the latter part of the journey we saw, some distance off, the monstrous beasts which had so alarmed our guide. To my great surprise and pleasure I perceived that they were horses, four in number, that had evidently belonged to the army, and had strayed from it or been left behind for some reason. Three were full-grown, and one was a good-sized foal. The largest, a fine stallion, had still some remnants of straps or thongs about the head and neck. I was much excited at the spectacle, and anxious to secure the animals, which would be of immense value to us.

With the exception of Choquo, none of the Indians with

me had ever before seen a horse, and all seemed uneasy at the novel sight. The first thing I thought best to do was to withdraw my men into a little wood which lay under a small hill close by, so that I might have time to arrange some plan for capturing the horses. My great fear was that we might prematurely frighten them, for I judged they must have become half wild, and if alarmed might gallop off and escape us altogether. In the wood I conferred earnestly with Choquo as to the best course to adopt; but first of all we explained to the Indians that those creatures were not ferocious beasts of prey, but escaped domestic animals of a quiet and inoffensive nature, exceedingly useful and highly prized by white men. Having in this way inspired them with some degree of confidence, we went on to arrange a plan of action. We decided that the best course was to endeavour to get the animals into the wood, where they would be at a disadvantage, and we should have a better chance of securing them. The wood was of small size—probably not exceeding five acres in extent—and one side of it was bounded by the hill, which at that part formed a low cliff, like a wall, so curved as to make a kind of bay in the middle. I saw at once that if we could succeed in driving the horses into this bay their capture would be almost certain. This decided our plan, and I gave my orders accordingly. I was to remain in the wood with some of the Indians, concealing ourselves in such fashion and in such positions as to enable us, at the proper time, to close in behind the horses when they entered the wood, and drive them towards the recess in the cliff. Having made the Indians thoroughly understand what it was they had to do, I instructed Choquo to take with him the rest of the party and make his way, by a detour through some broken ground, beyond the horses, so as to turn them from the more open country towards the wood. On all the Indians I impressed the necessity for avoiding violent action or loud cries, so as not to excite the animals more than what was unavoidable. In all things requiring silence and stealthiness the Indians are very clever and well-practised, so that they not only fully understood my instructions, but carried them out to perfection.

Choquo and those with him cautiously made their way in the desired direction, without in the least exciting the

suspicion of the horses; I very anxious watching their progress from my hiding-place in the margin of the wood. Having at length got beyond the horses, and spread themselves out, they appeared in the open and commenced slowly advancing upon them. Soon they were perceived by the stallion, who gave a loud snort of surprise and alarm, which at once aroused the attention of the others. Choquo advanced slowly, calling to the animals in the manner of the Spanish grooms. For a moment they appeared in doubt; but as he gradually drew nearer their love of liberty prevailed, and they trotted away from him in our direction. Every now and again they would stop and gaze with suspicion on their slowly advancing pursuers, and then start off afresh with much stamping of feet and snorting. This went on for some time, the horses getting nearer and nearer to the wood, which they seemed reluctant to enter. Finding, however, no other way of avoiding those who were encompassing them, they dashed into the wood, the stallion leading the way and the others following close behind. I whistled to my men (the signal agreed upon), and they at once emerged from their hiding-places, and, reinforced by Choquo and his men, who now joined us, the whole party commenced heading the horses towards the cliff, and towards that part of it where the bay or recess was. By slow degrees, and with much careful manœuvring, we at length got them into the opening in the rocks without having over-excited them. I at once gave orders to the Indians to use all possible celerity in twining tough tendrils and creeps from tree to tree, so as to enclose the horses in the bay of the cliff, in a kind of half-moon fence, through which they should not be able to force their way. This was soon done, for there was no lack on the spot of materials for the work, and the vine tendrils and some of the creepers are as strong as any cordage of equal thickness. Having carefully inspected the fence at every part, and making sure that it could not possibly be broken through, even by a charge of cavalry, I experienced a joyful sense of relief from my great and protracted anxiety, for I now knew that our prizes were perfectly secure, and it only remained for us to take leisurely possession of them.

Having rested for a time and considered what was best to be done next, I made some strong halters out of the

hide straps the Indians had with them, which they were in the habit of using for dragging about the sledges and carts. Choquo and myself then entered the enclosure and approached the horses very deliberately. They would not let us get very close to them at first, but we followed them up and down for some time, calling and coaxing them, but they were by no means willing to return to captivity. They made three or four vigorous charges at the fence, but finding they could not break through, and were confronted there by the Indians, they seemed to despair of success, and became more subdued, allowing us to get closer to them. At length, by a quick movement, Choquo managed to seize the foal by the neck, and, passing a halter over its head, he led it to the fence and there secured it. Very soon the dam came trotting and whinnying to its side, and was easily captured and made fast. The other mare did not give us much concern, for I counted upon readily capturing her when we had made sure of the stallion, to whom our united efforts were now directed.

Being a powerful and high-spirited animal, this was no easy task. But at length we got him into a corner of the bay of the cliff, whence he could only escape by passing close to Choquo on one side, or myself on the other. I called quietly to Choquo to turn him in my direction, which being done, the animal made an attempt to rush past me, but I, dashing forward, seized him first by the forelock with my right hand, and then with my left by the remnant of straps hanging from his head and neck. He plunged and struggled for a little time, but I held to him stoutly, and at last, with the assistance of Choquo, succeeded in passing a halter over his head. This concluded the struggle, and he allowed himself to be taken quietly away and made fast to a tree. Then we went in search of the remaining mare, and, as I expected, she gave us little trouble in capturing and securing her. The Indians had witnessed all our proceedings so far with wonder and awe. Now they gave expression to their satisfaction at the completeness of our success. They recognized it as a triumph in what appeared to them a desperate and dangerous struggle, but none of them (excepting Choquo) could form any proper estimate of the inestimable value of the capture we had made.

Being now fully in possession of the horses, our next task was to get them home. For this purpose we fashioned head-stalls out of the hide thongs, securely knotting them where necessary, and carefully fitting them to the heads of the three horses, so that they could not slip off. Seeing how completely the animals were now brought under control and guidance, I could not resist the temptation of mounting and riding the stallion. I knew it must have been a well-trained horse, but could not tell how far its spell of liberty had made it forget its education. Saddle and stirrups there were, of course, none, and hide thongs had to do duty for reins, without a bit. Still, with a tight-fitting head-stall, I might be able to control him, and at any rate I resolved to try. I got on his back and ordered him to be cast loose in the enclosure. At first he plunged and tore about rather wildly, but presently he calmed down, and I was able to ride him up and down the enclosed space, with a perfectly secure seat, until he fully acknowledged my mastery. Choquo, not to miss the chance of distinguishing himself before the Indians, dealt similarly with the mare we had last caught, and was equally successful, with far less difficulty.

All being now ready for our departure, I entrusted the mare and foal to a couple of our most courageous and reliable Indians, giving them directions to lead it by the head-stall and allow the foal to follow in a halter held by another man. By this means I thought that if the mare by any chance broke away from her keepers she would not be lost, as she would not desert her foal, which was not likely to be able to escape. A way being cut through the fence, the cavalcade, headed by myself and Choquo, made its way through the wood and into the level country beyond, followed by the admiring and astonished Indians. We had very little trouble with the horses on the way home to Cargutah, and no serious mishap, and long before we reached the town fatigue and hunger had made them tame enough.

It was evening when we entered Cargutah in a sort of triumphal procession, followed by a great crowd of awe-stricken Indians, very few of whom had ever before seen a horse or a mounted man. The cacique, De Guzman, and all the chiefs were delighted beyond measure with this new acquisition, and congratulations and compliments were

showered upon me from all sides. Curiously enough, De Guzman recognized in the stallion one of his own horses—one of the three he had lost at cards—and the one he had been most accustomed to ride before it left his possession. The recognition was not wholly on his side, for it was plain that the noble animal knew its old master and was pleased at meeting with him again.

The possession of these animals suggested to the active mind of De Guzman future possibilities of an Indian cavalry force, which would complete the superiority of the Cherokees over all other Indian tribes, and help to realize his ambitious designs. And certainly a stallion and three mares (for the foal was a female) might very well become in time the progenitors of a number of horses, which might be made useful for military purposes. How far the Indians were capable of becoming horse-keepers and horsemen remained, however, a problem which time alone could solve. Meanwhile it was arranged that De Guzman should have back his horse, that the care of the mare and foal should be specially entrusted to Choquo, and that the other animal should be considered as belonging to me.

Thereafter the horses were found very useful for draught and carrying purposes, as occasion required. When not so employed De Guzman made full use of them for training the Indians in horsemanship, and though his lessons were necessarily confined to but a few of the chief men, all became more or less familiar with the appearance, habits, character, and movements of creatures whom they at first regarded with terror, and took to be ferocious and unnatural monsters. In a little time many of them became good riders, and none remained who did not understand the true nature of those harmless and useful beasts. It was no longer possible that our Indians should fly in terror at the mere appearance of cavalry, as so many Indians had done during the march of the army.

Touching the equipment of our animals, De Guzman and myself were much concerned. Bits of bronze and bridles, etc., of hide, were easy to provide, but the making of saddles and horseshoes greatly exercised us. The latter, indeed, we had to abandon, after many fruitless attempts, and we determined to leave the horses unshod. No harm resulted from this, for as they were, for the most part, used

on soft and level ground, and as, even when drawing minerals from the hills, their work was light, and not constant, we found that, by a little attention to the trimming of their hoofs, they did very well without shoes. In saddle-making I had some experience, and, with proper materials and tools, I could make a passably good saddle. Here such materials and tools were not to be had, and their places could only be supplied by very indifferent substitutes. However, I at length succeeded in making a few saddles which answered pretty well; though the Indians, as a rule, seemed to think them a needless encumbrance, and preferred riding barebacked, or merely with a skin thrown over the horse. Many of them became expert riders in this way, showing a remarkable aptitude for horsemanship; but of course, for military purposes, such a mode of riding would be of little use, for without saddle and stirrups the horseman's seat would be insecure, and he could not sustain any great shock. For the better protection of the horses, should it ever become necessary to employ them in hostile encounters, De Guzman invented a simple sort of armour out of the quilted cotton material already mentioned. This armour was used for the necks, shoulders, and chests of the animals, as being the parts most liable to injury, but a sheet or quilt of it was also secured over the back, behind the saddle or seat, so as to give some protection to the flanks and haunches. This kind of defence for the horses was very meritorious, for, in addition to affording fair protection against injuries in battle, it did not encumber the horse, either by its weight or stiffness. In after times the Spaniards recognized its value, and employed it largely. De Guzman very frequently exercised the men and horses in military movements, and enforced upon the Indians a thorough understanding of the use of all weapons and accoutrements, and the necessity of keeping them in good condition.

I need not enumerate all the ways in which the horses were made useful to us, but must say that their services were particularly valuable in two things, namely, grinding corn and ploughing. One of them, harnessed to our corn mill, could do the work of many men, and we had thus such an abundance of flour as to enable us to give large quantities of it to neighbouring tribes in exchange for corn,

dried and fresh meat, game, skins and furs, and a variety of other things, including some copper, and occasionally a little gold, pearls, and rare stones. The gold, pearls, and precious stones commonly came into my possession, as the Indians set no great store by them, and De Guzman was willing that I should have them.

I had a good deal of difficulty in making use of our horses for ploughing purposes. For one thing, the ploughs I had hitherto made were very light, being made for hand use, and, to say the truth, not by any means the best of my inventions, being made at a time when our mechanical resources were little developed. But now I had metals and tools in abundance, and numerous workmen skilled in their use, and so I had courage enough to confront the task of making a plough fit to be drawn by a horse. That task I ultimately accomplished, with less labour and fewer mistakes than were involved in the making of my first imperfect hand-plough. The new implement was two-handled, and strongly built, with a heavy and well-shaped share of bronze, and all necessary arrangements for harnessing a horse to it. In actual trial it turned out quite satisfactory, and we could now make a good deep furrow with ease and precision, and turn over a great piece of ground in the course of a day, without imposing laborious and irksome work on our Indians.

CHAPTER XXV.

Strange news—Message from two Spanish prisoners—The Creeque Indians and their sun-dance—Human sacrifices—We organize an expedition of rescue—I lead the advance guard—Rapid marching—Crossing a river—Quartering in a cavern—An Indian cemetery—Reconnoitring—The sun-dance ceremonies—The victims ready.

THERE came to me one day, whilst I was busy in the workshops, a message from De Guzman requiring my presence in the town at once. On going thither I found him and some of the Indian lords engaged in interrogating an old man of our tribe, who had just returned from a journey with a strange story. He had brought back with him a piece of skin on the smooth side of which some Spanish words had been traced in charcoal, though nearly all of them were obliterated by careless handling. But the word "Christianos" could be made out, and some others which appeared to be part of an earnest entreaty for succour. Fortunately the Indian was himself able to explain the mystery. He was one of those who went about the country to pick up any useful relics of the Spanish army which he might come upon. In those wanderings he had recently come to a country occupied by a tribe of Indians called Creeques, and amongst those people he had found two white men, like De Guzman and myself (as he said), and one man who was entirely black, all three being detained as prisoners, and harshly used by the Creeques. Having pity for them, and being desirous of doing what he thought would be agreeable to us, he had found means to make the prisoners understand that he was friendly to them, and knew of other white men at a distance to whom he would be willing to communicate their state. When they had realized his meaning they made the black marks on the skin with a bit of burnt stick, and bade him convey it to the white men of whom he had spoken. He had learned from

the Creeques themselves that the three prisoners, with others, were shortly to be put to death with torture, at a great religious festival which was about to be held, called the sun-dance. This, our Indian friends told us, was a ceremony of great antiquity, but not now much practised, nor was its object or its meaning well understood. They thought that long ago it might have been part of some prevalent religion which had been forgotten. Occasionally even now the Indians of several tribes would agree to assemble at some appointed place, to dance and perform other ceremonies around a tall pole set up for the purpose. Those ceremonies would last several days, during which the Indians, even of tribes the most hostile to each other, were bound to maintain peace. The dancing, which was kept up continuously until those engaged in it fell down exhausted, was varied by self-tortures and mutilations of a singular kind. From branches left at the top of the pole long thongs of hide hung down. Indians who desired to distinguish themselves would come forward and permit two long slits to be cut through the skin and flesh of their chests with a sharp flint knife. The flesh between the slits being raised up, the end of the hanging thongs would be passed beneath and made fast. The devotees would then throw themselves backwards with a full strain on the cord, and dance wildly about the pole. If they succeeded in causing the cord to cut through the strip of flesh, their sacrifice was complete; if not, they danced on as long as they could hold out, and were released by their friends at sunset. Such men were ever after held in great esteem and honour, as having given high proof of their courage and endurance. But slaves and prisoners were also liable to be subjected forcibly to this torture, and in a more fatal manner. They were more securely attached to the cords, and for them there was no release, and no escape, but death. While so fastened they were made to leap and gyrate by being tortured with fire, and in other horrible ways, and this went on while life endured in them, which was sometimes for two or three days.

All these things being fully explained to us, then or afterwards, we well understood in what unhappy case the poor Spanish prisoners and the negro were placed, and both De Guzman and myself were resolved that an effort

should be made to save them. Our Indian friends, and the old cacique in particular, were easily persuaded to the same conclusion. It then only remained to be considered what was best to be done, and the manner of doing it. De Guzman, taking things in order, as was his wont, first secured an agreement of the assembled chiefs that an expedition should be despatched at once. Then he invited a discussion as to the number, composition, and equipment of the force. The position, as he clearly explained it, was this: whatever was to be done must be done quickly, for in three days (our old Indian said) the pagan ceremony was to commence, and at any time thereafter the prisoners might be sacrificed. Then the distance was such that the utmost expedition would have to be used to traverse it in good time. The Creeques were known to be a brave and numerous people, and would have the support of many other Indians attending the ceremony. So we had on the one hand shortness of time as telling against elaborate preparations, and, on the other, the necessity of being sufficiently prepared to cope with formidable opponents. Our resolve, therefore, had to be so shaped as to reconcile those conflicting conditions in the best manner possible. The decision ultimately come to, under the influence of De Guzman, was to send off at once a force of fifty of our best and fleetest men, and, as soon as possible, to send after them a more numerous body by way of reinforcement. The advance guard could hurry forward, and—taking such opportunities as might present themselves—do whatever was possible, and either carry off the prisoners, or engage the attention of their captors until the arrival of the main body.

Those points being settled, I was nominated to take charge of the forward force, while De Guzman remained behind to organize the main body. Not a moment was lost in making ready. Within four hours from the time our plans were settled upon, my command was ready to march. Twenty-five of my fifty men were well-trained crossbowmen; the remainder carried their native arms, as well as pikes of our own manufacture, the height of a man, with the use of which they were familiar. Every man of the force had a waist-belt, holding on one side a battle-axe, and on the other a long knife, or short sword (for it might be

called either), of our make. The crossbow-men had each a bandoleer, charged with thirty bolts, cross-belted over his left shoulder. For other equipment, each man of the party carried a skin sack at his back, containing a supply of bread, and a small extra supply of bolts in case of need. For on the crossbow I depended a good deal, because of its great range and precision, and the possibility of using it in positions in which the longbow could not very well be employed—as in lying and crouching attitudes. The want of ordinary arrows we might be able to supply away from home, but not so the crossbow bolts. That was why I thought it advisable to carry an extra supply of those missiles, and as things turned out, it was fortunate I had such an idea. The sergeants, as we called them, or leaders of ten men, were furnished with copper helmets, and coats of quilted cotton; the others wore the native skin-coats, leggings, and moccasins. For myself, I rode the mare belonging to me, the better to keep up with and direct my men in their rapid march. For arms I had a long lance, a remounted Spanish sword-blade, and a strong, double-headed battle-axe. My head was protected by an excellent and strong helmet, and both myself and my horse were clad in the quilted cotton already mentioned. Thanks to the great prevision and persistency of De Guzman in forming an ample store of all things necessary for military use, my fifty men and myself were quickly supplied with everything that was required for either armament or equipment. When our little troop was finally mustered for review, it looked as serviceable and efficient a force as any which could have been found in Europe, albeit a little outlandish and grotesque.

It was some five hours after noon when we set out under the guidance of the old Indian. At first we took a course down the river of Cargutah, which we crossed by means of a stout raft, which I had caused to be built some time before to enable us to bring minerals from beyond the river. We then diverged from the river and passed through a broken and hilly country towards the north-west. Afterwards we came to a region of forests, in which we continued for the rest of the journey. For six hours we kept up a quick and steady march without stopping. We then halted for the night near a small stream, in the neighbourhood of

which there was plenty of game. Here I caused a camp to be formed, protected by a circular abatis—a very good defence for a temporary purpose, in a place where trees are plentiful, and one which can be put up with little trouble to tired men. Having posted sentries, and seen that all had had a hearty meal, we laid down for the night, which passed over quietly enough. Next morning, by daybreak, another good meal was prepared and consumed, after which our march was resumed at the same rapid speed. About midday we came to a river which caused us some delay, by necessitating the construction of a raft, and its navigation to the other side. We made it of such fallen and floating timber as most readily came to hand, tying the various pieces together with strips of bark and tendrils. The whole, when complete, we covered with brushwood. The raft was not very secure, but it served to keep our things dry and to carry across such of our party as did not care to swim the river. When ready, about a score of our men stripped themselves, and plunging into the water, partly towed and partly pushed the raft to the other side. Choquo swam my horse across. There I commanded a halt to let the men rest and refresh. Meanwhile I revolved in my own mind whether it might not be well to do something to facilitate the passage of the river by De Guzman and the main body when they came that way in our tracks, for it might be that time would be of great importance to them and us, and it would cause dangerous delay if they had to stop to build suitable rafts. After consulting with Choquo and some of the sergeants, I determined to leave five of the most handy and reliable of our men behind, with instructions to recross the river and set about making proper rafts. This being settled we resumed our march as before, not halting until sunset, and doing the same things as on the last night.

It was late in the afternoon of the third day of our departure from Cargutah when certain scouts we had sent in advance brought back word that we were within an hour's march of the place where the Creeques and their allies were assembled. It was still to be found out whether we had arrived in time to save the prisoners; but I thought that in any case it was first of all advisable to select some place where we could lie hid without much danger of

discovery. After a little searching we found a place the most suitable. This was a sort of shallow cavern in the face of a precipitous hill in a dense part of the forest. A wide space of ground in front of the cavern was, however, bare and rocky, and I decided that we could not do better than quarter ourselves in this place for a time. Having so resolved, I sent off the old Indian to find out for certain whether the prisoners were dead or alive. While awaiting his return, I employed my men in constructing an abatis in front of the cavern as a precaution against possible attack. It was made in the form of a half-moon, and was composed of large and small branches of trees laid one upon the other with the thick ends inwards. The cavern was of great height and good width, but no great depth backwards. It was, in fact, a sort of a hollow overshadowed by projecting rocks sixty or seventy feet above our heads. On each side of this recess a spur of rocks ran out a little way like a wall, so that on the whole the place was very defensible in case of attack. At the back of the cavern there was a small shallow pool of water, not more than an inch deep in any part. I had this deepened and enlarged, by getting my men to scoop out the wet sand and earth from the bottom and sides; and when this was done the water, fed by some spring beneath, rose to its former level and filled the new basin. We found it pure and sweet, and it was most acceptable to us, as well as to the horse, for during the last few hours we had been without water.

Meanwhile, a party of our men who had been sent to forage in the forest returned with the carcasses of a couple of deer and a quantity of smaller game, so that now we had an abundant supply of food and drink. While making ourselves secure and comfortable in the cavern, I posted sentries in the margin of the forest, as a matter of military routine and discipline, for there was no reason to suppose that we should be disturbed in such a solitude. The Creeques could have no suspicion that an enemy was in their neighbourhood.

The old Indian seemed to be a long time absent, and I began to be seriously apprehensive about him before he came back, which he did at an advanced hour of the night. His news, however, was ample, and in its way satisfactory. He had had many difficulties to overcome, and had been

obliged to exercise great caution, but had succeeded in obtaining all the information necessary. The prisoners were alive and unharmed, and he had been able to communicate with them and inform them of our being close at hand. He had also made certain that the ceremonies of the sun-dance would commence in the morning, and that after the volunteer devotees had performed their parts, the prisoners were to be tied up and subjected to the cruel treatment already described. He found, moreover, that there was a great assemblage of Indians; so much so, that there was no room for them all in the little Indian town, and many of them had to encamp without the walls. All this helped to make our course clear. Our work was now plainly before us, and we had to do it, or at any rate attempt it, without delay, and without waiting for De Guzman. So I got my men ready and enjoined them to observe every precaution in approaching the enemy, and above all to wait for orders before action, and strictly obey them when given. I appointed the cavern as a rendezvous for all who might find themselves separated from their comrades, intending in any event, fortunate or otherwise, to come back that way as being the one best known to us. I was mindful, too, of the lesson Captain Roland used always to impress upon us—that a good commander would always make arrangements for covering his retreat in the event of a reverse. So I appointed a sergeant and five men to remain behind and take charge of the cavern during our absence, directing them in particular to strengthen the abatis from within by piling stones and earth upon the ends of the branches projecting into the cavern, so as to make the whole work more solid and immovable, and so as also to form a kind of raised platform, or foot-hold, giving command of the ground in front of the abatis. Most of the materials for this purpose they could procure by further deepening and enlarging the pool of water at the back of the cavern, thus serving a double purpose. It was not without reluctance that I diminished my fighting force by these six men, but I considered it would be most imprudent to do otherwise. I was, moreover, compelled to spare another man—a quick runner—for the purpose of sending him back over our track to communicate our position and movements to

De Guzman, and hurry him to the front. The old Indian I again sent forward, in company with three others, to select a place from whence we might make our final rush upon the Creeques.

All these arrangements made, we cautiously set out from the cavern as soon as it was light. We were now less than forty strong, and had before us a dangerous and even desperate enterprise; but my men were all fairly good soldiers, very well armed, and brave and active.

Prudence, as well as necessity, obliged us to march in single file, as in this way we could most quietly and swiftly glide through the dense forest. Also, as a matter of prudence, I gave my horse, ready for mounting at a moment's notice, in charge of an Indian, to follow in our rear, where any noises it might make would be less compromising for us. Having advanced for some time in this way, we were met by the old Indian and his companions, who proceeded to conduct us to a place they had selected for our ambush. This, when we had attained to it, we found to be a desolate and abandoned spot, which had in former times been used as a cemetery for the dead of the Indians. It was all overgrown with rank weeds and bushes, with here and there fragments of bleached bones. It was an old custom with some of the Indian tribes to place the bodies of their dead on rude platforms, built on high poles; and this was a place of the kind, though evidently long disused. There were many remains of poles and platforms still standing, but nearly all in a ruinous and crumbling state. Not above a dozen were left sufficiently stable to bear still some portions of the bodies they had formerly supported. All the rest had fallen to the ground, where the bones of the dead had been gnawed and broken by wild animals. I found on inspection that the position would serve our purpose very well. It was not above a couple of hundred yards from the verge of the forest and the open space where the sun-dance was to take place. All our Indians said there was no fear of anyone coming that way, because such melancholy places were always avoided by the natives. Here, then, we concealed ourselves, awaiting events.

In company with three or four others, I (laying aside my bright helmet) stole quietly through the trees to see what

was passing beyond the forest. We saw a wide plain and some groups of Indians a good way off, near the town, which was a walled place standing on elevated ground, the gate being towards us. About midway across the plain we saw the tall pole exactly as it had been described to us. It was a straight slim tree, which must have been seventy or eighty feet high as it grew in the forest. The trunk had been made smooth all the way up, with the exception of certain projecting branches at the top. These had been trimmed, and now stood out from the trunk like strong arms. From their ends about a dozen long cords were hanging nearly down to the ground, ready for the victims, voluntary or otherwise. We waited and watched in our hiding-place for what appeared to be a long time, without any great change taking place. At last a movement was visible in the direction of the town, from the gates of which crowds of people began to troop, mixing with those outside. Presently there came a loud booming sound, and this my companions informed me was the sound of the great drum which is beaten on solemn and ceremonious occasions only. This was the signal for the commencement of the ceremonies. The crowds of men, women, and children formed themselves into a sort of loose procession, and, headed by the drummers, marched towards the pole. Round this they marched two or three times in a wide circle, singing or chanting in a monotonous way to the incessant beating of the drum. Then the drumming ceased, and all stood still, facing towards the pole. Those in the front ranks next sat down upon the ground, while those at the back gazed over their heads. As the mass of people arranged themselves in this way, we, who were secretly watching, became aware of a cluster of people near the pole. They were ten or a dozen in number, and from the way they were trussed up we judged they were the prisoners doomed to be sacrificed. Even at the distance we were off, we thought we were able to make out amongst them the two white men and the black man.

The Indians being all arranged in the manner aforesaid, and all being silent and attentive, one man stood up and made them a speech and after him another, and then another, until several had spoken, and some of them for a good time. We could not hear what they said; but I

observed as each orator came forward to speak, he first went to the great drum and gave three loud taps upon it, by way, I suppose, of bespeaking attention. The speech-making being done, the multitude rose to their feet and broke into a wild kind of circular dance, some moving in one direction, and others in the opposite, all yelling and whooping, and the great drum going all the time. The noise and confusion were so great, and the whole scene so extraordinary, that one might think all the demons of hell were let out for a holiday.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The plan of attack—A rush on the worshippers—Their flight and slaughter—A single-handed encounter—And another—Indian resolution—The rescued men—Retreat and pursuit—At bay—Defence of the cavern—Surrounded by Indians—An uneasy night.

FOR my part I had soon enough of those heathenish antics, and I thought we could find no better time than the present to do what we had to do. So I crept quietly back to my men to make the last arrangements for the attack we meditated. We had now all the knowledge and information we required. We knew the position and surroundings of the men we wished to rescue; we saw how the Indians were occupied; and we had, moreover, observed with great contentment that very few of them appeared to be armed. We had, therefore, only to think how best we should fall upon them. The surprise must be sudden and complete, as otherwise the prisoners might be carried off before we could get to them. We could soon disperse this unarmed multitude, but in that there would be small profit if we gave them time enough to take the prisoners with them.

Having considered every point which seemed to require attention, I quickly formed my plan of action. I directed Choquo to lead the troops along the edge of the forest, for a good distance to the right, and there to await my signal to charge upon the crowd, and to do so in two close lines. For myself, I mounted my horse, and making my helmet and everything about me secure and ready for use, I took with me a single Indian, and went off to the left, so as to gain a position such that Choquo and myself should be nearly on opposite sides of the circle of dancers. The signal for Choquo to charge was to be my appearance on horseback in the open. Having gained the position I desired, I told my Indian to have his knife ready to cut the

bonds of the prisoners, and to hold tightly by my saddle, and be prepared to run with the horse. After that I rode quietly and slowly into the open, and had scarcely emerged from the forest when, with a great cry, Choquo and his band dashed from their concealment and came charging on the mob of Indians in two close and well-kept lines. I scarcely think that any of the enemy had time to notice me riding out of the wood, but if any did, their sight and attention were at once turned to Choquo and his men. At any rate, I at once put my horse to the gallop and made straight for the pole, to which I was much nearer than the force under Choquo. The dancing had stopped, and the crowd of Indians were thrown into a state of consternation, not knowing what to do on an attack so suddenly made by such strange-looking people. Some ran hither and thither with loud cries; some made for the town; others fled in various directions; many remained stationary with amazement. This was the state of things when I galloped amongst those who lay in my way—riding down some, and using my lance freely on others. I soon made a clear space about the pole, and turning to my man, I bade him use his knife as I had directed. Whilst he was engaged about this, I followed up the retreating Indians to prevent any rally on their part and to drive them further away. In the distance I caught a glimpse of Choquo's party furiously plying sword and pike upon the flying Indians, though I could not perceive that there was occasion for so much severity, for they seemed to be meeting with no resistance. As I was meditating upon the best way of calling them off, I suddenly found that I had to look to myself. For, out of the crowd of fugitive Indians before me, one of the few who happened to be armed turned back and faced me with an arrow fitted to his bow. I could not deny the challenge, but went at him with increased speed and couched lance. He waited until I came quite near and then, taking deliberate aim, let fly at me with all the spring of his bow. At the moment I ducked my head, and the arrow loudly rattled off my helmet and passed harmlessly away. The next moment I had run him fairly through the chest and he fell to the ground, holding my lance-shaft tightly with both hands. And such was the persistency of the man that he kept his hold on the lance with a foot of it buried

in his body, in spite of being dragged to and fro over the ground by the movements of my horse. I suppose it was the sight of my difficulty with this Indian which caused another to run back to attack me. This man carried a small flint hatchet which, when near enough, he threw at me with great force and good aim. The head of the weapon struck my horse, a little in front of my right leg, and partly cut through the quilted covering which protected the animal at that part, but doing no other harm. His blow delivered, the Indian turned to fly; but, abandoning my lance for the moment, and drawing my sword, I dashed after him, and quickly coming up with him, cut him down with a stroke between the neck and shoulder, whereupon he dropped to the ground, bleeding profusely, and as good as dead. Just then, up came my Indian running to my help, and seeing my lance still in the grasp of the first Indian, he went to him, and incontinently cleft his head in two with a blow from his bronze axe, and then dragged the lance from his grasp and out of his body and handed it to me.

I sent this man at once to Choquo with orders to desist from further pursuit, and join me by the pole. Thither I went myself, to find all the prisoners released, and some of them already departed, being in haste to make the best use of a liberation which they could not understand, and probably mistrusted. The two white men and the negro, as well as a couple of Indians, remained. The two white men were Spaniards, common soldiers, who said they had wandered from the army and lost it; but I suspected later on, from all they said, that they had deserted, rather than go on enduring the hardships and miseries to which they found themselves more than ever exposed when the army again set out for the west, after the death of De Soto. Deserters or not, they were later on made very welcome at Cargutah, where they proved themselves grateful and useful men. The negro had been a slave to a gentleman of the army, but being badly treated (he said) he had run away, in company with a Barbary Moor (also a slave), when De Soto was last encamped by the Rio Grande. He and the Moor had lived very comfortably on an island in a river, where they had built themselves a hut. But the Moor had died of a fever, and the negro, a few days before our coming, had been captured on the shore of the river by a band of Indians and brought

to this place to be sacrificed. The Spaniards were in bad case owing to long ill-treatment and the tightness of their bonds; but the negro, a man of gigantic size and strength, was little the worse for his captivity. He, too, proved to be a most excellent acquisition at Cargutah; and, in a way which can be more properly stated further on in this account, he was the means of conferring an extraordinary benefit upon our community.

When Choquo and his party had joined us, I caused the two Spaniards to be mounted on my horse, which I gave in charge of the negro. Then, putting my men in order, I gave the word to march, our course being in the same direction as that over which we had come. I was much pleased with the entire success of our plans, both as regards action and expedition, for everything had been done to time and order, without the least miscarriage. I do not think that, from the time we first burst from the woods until we again returned to them, as much as half-an-hour had passed. Truly there had been more slaughter than I cared for, or was necessary, for on looking back we could see five-and-twenty or thirty prostrate forms on the plain, and there was no such resistance as justified this. Moreover, I knew this would needlessly exasperate the Creeques and their allies, and we must lay our account with their seeking to avenge themselves upon us. Probably they would have sought to do so in any event, for the insult we had put upon them by breaking up their religious festival, and carrying off their prisoners, was too gross to escape resentment. Indeed, we had yet hardly reached the cover of the forest when we saw several armed Indians running from the town in our direction, and I made no doubt we had raised a nest of hornets who would deal us some severe stings. We were but a very few men against a host of enemies, and unless we succeeded in making good our escape to a place of safety before they had time to encompass us on all sides, our chances of saving our lives were but small.

Accordingly I urged our men to the utmost expedition. The horse, with the two Spaniards, the negro, and the two released Indians (who had chosen to come with us), I sent on first under the guidance of the old Indian. The spearmen I distributed right and left of our route, with instructions to watch for any attack on our flanks; myself, with

the crossbow-men, formed the rear guard. Whether it was in this march, or during the attack on the dancers, that we lost one of our men, I cannot say; but later on, when a muster was taken, one was missing, and never reappeared.

In this order we hurried along for about half-an-hour, hearing from time to time the yells and war-whoops of the Indians behind us. Then we could see the dusky forms of the more advanced of them gliding through the trees. Now and again I directed a shot to be taken at the more presumptuous of them, to check their impetuosity; but I would not permit our march to be arrested, for fear that such delay on our part would give time for more of them to come up. Nevertheless, the number of those closing in upon us increased, and as they drew nearer they called on us to stand and fight, abusing us as cowards and women. To all this I paid no heed, being resolved to keep on as long as I could, as the only safe thing to do under the circumstances. But at the end of the half-hour it became plain that we should not be able to reach the cavern without a fight for it; and making up my mind to this, I waited until we came to a place which looked like the dry bed of a torrent, with bushes and tall grass growing on each side. Having crossed this, I ordered my men of the rear guard to hide themselves in the herbage, and make ready to use their crossbows when I gave the word. No sooner were we thus in ambush than some forty or fifty of our pursuers came leaping and bounding into the gulley in a pretty compact body. I waited until they were well out of cover and within easy range, and then shouted to my men to let fly. In an instant a score of bolts were discharged at the Indians, stretching four or five of them on the ground, and wounding many more who did not fall. The enemy paused for a moment at this strange and unexpected reception, but, quickly rallying, again dashed forward with a wild whoop. My men now hailed upon them a continuous shower of bolts, so well sent that in a little time there were not twenty of the enemy able to continue the charge. These, seeing how few they were against an unseen and formidably-armed foe, drew up when more than half way across the gulley, paused for a moment, and then turned and fled to the other side amidst a parting shower of missiles from us. It would have been an easy matter for us to have pursued and dispersed

this party, but we had done enough for our purpose; and, having effectually checked the advance of the enemy, I drew my men quickly and quietly away, and hastened after our comrades, leaving our pursuers to imagine if they liked that we were still in ambush waiting for them.

After this, our march to the cavern was untroubled. On arriving there, I lost not a moment in seeing to the defences of the place. I found the men I had left behind had done very good work in my absence, and had intelligently carried out the instructions I had given them. They had thrown up a bank of earth behind the abatis, which, with a little additional labour under my superintendence, served as a sort of walk or platform, from whence arrows could be shot over the top of the abatis. In a little time I had everything in as good order as possible within the enclosure. Every man had a place and duty assigned to him. In the woods without I had caused sentinels to be placed to give us warning of any hostile approach. The horse, now a mere encumbrance, and awkward to accommodate within the cavern, I gave in charge of one of our Indians to take back to De Guzman, while yet the way was open. By this means, too, I was able to send quickly to him the latest news of our condition, and an urgent entreaty for expedition on his part.

Having attended as best I could to all matters, I calmly and carefully surveyed the situation, and felt confident that we could make a good defence in our present position. We could not be surrounded and attacked from rear or flanks, nor was it at all probable that our front could be forced, so well defended as it was. Neither could we be starved out in any reasonable time, for we had food to last us for several days, and a constant and plentiful supply of water, of which we could not be deprived. Long before our food gave out, De Guzman and the main body would have arrived to our assistance, and dispersed any force which might be beleaguering us.

For some hours we were left in the full enjoyment of a welcome repose. But shortly after midday, we had word from our scouts that parties of Indians were coming through the forest from the direction of the Creeque village. Then we were warned of their nearer approach in larger bodies. Later on, our last scouts came running in with the intelligence

that the woods around were alive with Indians, all stripped and painted for battle. By this time the afternoon was well advanced, and as we were as ready as we should ever be to receive the enemy, I was as willing as not that the attack upon us should be made in daylight. A night assault would put us at a disadvantage, for in the darkness the enemy could approach us more safely, and crowd upon us at close quarters with more immunity from our arrows and bolts. We were, however, not in a position to force the fighting, and must abide the pleasure of the enemy.

As the day wore on in this state of watchfulness and suspense on our part, it became more and more evident that it would pass away without an attack. The Indians in the forest in front of us were constantly increasing in numbers, until it was quite certain that many hundreds of them had assembled. From time to time some of them stepped out into the open, hurling at us challenges and abuse, and threatening us with horrible punishments. Some of the more daring of those boasters we could easily have reached with our crossbows—a danger of which they were not aware—but I was not minded to impress them too early with the power of our weapons; and to all their taunts and threats we made no reply by action, sign, or word.

At the approach of night I divided my men into five watches of two hours each, so as to cover the whole period of darkness. I arranged that, during the last two hours, there should be a double guard, for I knew that a little before dawn was the favourite time of the Indians for a night attack I directed that the men not on guard should repose themselves, but be in a state of readiness to encounter the enemy at the first alarm. When night set in, all was quiet on our side. The Indians in the forest also relapsed into a state of quietude, though we could see through the trees that they had lighted several large fires, feeling, no doubt, perfectly safe from any attack by us. I remained on duty during the earlier part of the night, to make sure that everything was in good order and ready for any emergency. I then left Choquo in charge, and threw myself down to get some sleep, giving directions to be aroused on the first sign of a movement on the part of the enemy.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Early morning assault—A determined attack—Our crossbows at work—Daylight at last—The enemy frustrated—The killed and wounded—A lesson in humanity—Condition of our defences—Our supplies and prospects—A quiet day and wakeful night—Mysterious light—A shower of fire—The abatis in flames—Our rampart gone—Defenceless—Preparing for the worst—A corner of the cavern—The last formation.

I HAD slept for some hours when Choquo awoke me, saying he thought the Indians in the forest were stirring. I jumped to my feet, and mounting our clay rampart, looked towards the forest. It was too dark to see anything; but, listening attentively, I could hear some faint sounds, which grew more distinct, and I concluded that the Indians in front were gathering for an attack upon us. I had all my men aroused, and quietly placed at their several posts. The movements in our front were now plainly audible to us all, but they continued so long that I almost began to think they could not be the prelude to an assault, when all at once a single piercing war-whoop rang through the night air, and was instantly followed by a chorus of similar cries, and a sound as of the rushing of a multitude in our direction. In a few moments, a mass of yelling Indians had thrown themselves against the abatis. Some pulled furiously at the branches, to get them out of their way, while others hacked at them with flint hatchets to cut a way through. Those more behind sent showers of arrows flying into the cavern. I called to my crossbowmen to throw themselves down on the bank of earth, and shoot immediately into the mass of men below them busy destroying the abatis, and not to mind those further away. The Indians, having surveyed our defences from a distance, had, no doubt, thought that they could readily tear a way through a mere wall of branches, and so get at us. But they had not reckoned on the further end of those branches

being weighted down by a mass of earth and stones, and rendered immovable. Not understanding this, they persevered in what was really a hopeless task, all the time being exposed to a continuous discharge of bolts from above, every one of which told, being shot at pretty close quarters into a mass of men. Still they worked on, doing some damage, certainly, but making little progress. Some of them who, by desperate efforts, had managed to drag themselves a little way up the face of the abatis, were hurled back by the spears, swords, or axes of the men I had kept in reserve. In a little time, the ground in front of our position was strewn with prostrate Indians. Yet, notwithstanding their heavy losses, they kept up their assault with great fury and heroism, without being able to make a practicable breach, and without a single one of them being able to force a way into the enclosure. Fresh bodies of them rushed forward from time to time to replace those who had fallen, but those, in their turn, had to pay dearly for learning the lesson that the defence they threw themselves upon so valiantly, and which appeared so slight, was not to be swept away or demolished by all their efforts.

In this way the assault went on until the early dawn gave us the advantage of light on our side, and enabled our men to pick off the braver and more daring of the enemy. This was the turning point of the combat, for the Indians seeing the little progress they had made, and the greater danger to which they were now being exposed, in the better light, from our commanding position, became disheartened and gradually fell away from the abatis. After that, the fight became merely one of arrows and bolts at long range, for the enemy, though fairly repulsed, was loth to give up the contest. As this style of fighting was wholly unprofitable to us, I soon put a stop to it on our side, ordering my men to cease shooting and keep under cover. A few only of the crossbow-men I directed to keep their places on the bank, and to content themselves with an occasional shot, deliberately aimed, at conspicuous individuals amongst our assailants. I set them an example of what I meant by taking careful aim at one of the most advanced, and bringing him to the ground with a bolt full in his chest. The men observed my instructions and followed my example, and when several Indians had fallen in this way, the rest drew

back out of range, and at last wholly gave up the contest and returned silently and slowly into the forest, and we were quit of them for that occasion.

So ended this affair, with great honour and satisfaction to us, but not without loss, for with all our advantage of sheltered position, ten of our men were smitten, one being killed outright, and one afterwards dying of his wounds. Most of the others were but slightly injured, and none were rendered ineffective. In every instance the injuries were from arrows, for with a single exception there was no hand-to-hand fighting. That was an encounter between the negro and a powerful Creeque. I had placed the negro, with one of the Spaniards and five other men, to guard the rocky ridge on our left flank; Choquo, with the other Spaniard and a like number of men, I had stationed on the other flank. Both positions were strong and easily defended, but the Indians had attempted to carry them by climbing the rocks. They were repulsed with loss; but during the fighting on the left flank, a Creeque chief managed to secure a footing on the top of the rocks, and came nearer than any other to getting into the enclosure. The negro, however, threw himself upon him, and after a short struggle, flung him by main strength from the top of the rocks to the bottom, where he lay motionless and no doubt dead.

Of the enemy, we counted about a score lying dead or badly wounded, about the place in front of the abatis. Others had crawled away, or been carried off by their comrades. Some of our people wanted to go out to take scalps and kill the wounded, after the manner of the Indians; but this I would by no means permit, which seemed to surprise them. They were still more astonished when I took steps for communicating with the Creeques for the purpose of giving them permission to remove their fallen friends. I had not reproached my men with the needless slaughter of the morning at the sun-dance, but I had not forgotten it, and I now wanted to make them understand that I did not approve of wanton barbarity in warfare, which is of necessity barbarous enough in itself. Our old Indian guide was best acquainted with the Creeque dialect, and him I sent out in front to speak with the enemy. Seeing him unarmed, and signalling to them with a

green branch, they sent out one of their party to parley with him. It was some time before the Creeques appeared able to make up their minds to trust us. The proposal I had made was doubtless extraordinary, and beyond their comprehension. At last two or three of them ventured to come forward, and commenced carrying off their fallen comrades. Seeing that no harm befell them, more came to their assistance, and at last about a dozen of them were busy in the work of removing their dead and wounded from our front. All this, I suspected, was as incomprehensible to my Indians as to the enemy, and I doubt if I gained credit from either party for an act which they probably considered one of amazing and inexplicable folly.

When the ground in our front had been cleared of the enemy, I went round with Choquo and the Spaniards and some of the sergeants, to ascertain what injuries our defences had sustained in the late attack. The Creeques made no attempt to molest us, for our crossbow-men on the rampart were well able to cover us and keep them at a safe distance, as they well knew by this time. I found that the abatis was not damaged to any serious extent. Slight breaches had been made in it here and there, and most of the thinner branches had been broken off or hewed away, but the remaining stumps were none the less repellent for this, nor because of having their ends splintered and jagged. The height, which had been originally twelve feet, had somewhat diminished, but this I attributed to the weight of the bank of earth behind, and that of the men who had mounted it. I had all the rubbish cleared away, and set my men to work with their knives and hatchets to make the face of the abatis more upright and wall-like. When this had been done, it was, if anything, even better than at first, presenting, in its finished state, an array of bristling forks and stakes at least ten feet high. Being well satisfied with the state of things without, I next gave my mind to things within.

I first of all ascertained what amount of ammunition my crossbow-men had left. On our departure from Cargutah each man had thirty copper-tipped bolts in his bandoleer. I now found that some of the men had run out of bolts, and had been borrowing from their comrades. None had more than a few left. So it was fortunate that I had arranged for

every man of the party carrying a small supply of bolts in his wallet, for with these we were now able to replenish the bandoleers. In the late combat it might have gone hard with us had we been obliged to depend solely on our bows and arrows, for not only would our shooting have been less effective, but we should have been obliged to take up a more exposed position. There was no saying how much more fighting lay before us, and I was therefore glad that we could still rely on our crossbows for a good while longer. Of ordinary arrows we had abundance. No great number had been shot away, and these were more than made good by the quantity of Creeque arrows discharged into the cavern during the fight of the early morning. It is true that the best of these were only tipped with flint, bone, or horn (many were merely hardened at the point by fire), and that a large proportion of them had been made useless by striking against the back or roof of the cavern, but enough serviceable ones remained to more than supply all we had lost. Of food we had enough to last us yet three or four days on full diet, and certainly before then De Guzman would come to our relief, if the Indians should still continue to beleaguer us. On the latter point I had very little doubt, nor did it give me much concern, for I was now more confident than ever in our defences, and felt sure of beating our foes a second time should they again presume to attack us. On the other hand, if they tried to starve us out they would only be staying to endure the onslaught of De Guzman's force, of the existence of which they could have no suspicion. My belief was that they would certainly not go away without seeking to avenge themselves upon us in some way, and so I relaxed no precaution, but kept regular watch and ward, to guard against any surprise.

All that day the enemy lay quiet in the forest without pretence of concealment, but making no hostile movement, nor any sign of going away. As night came on I set watches as before, and saw that everything was in good order before I myself ventured to lie down. I slept soundly until nearly daybreak, and was then aroused by Choquo, who wished to call my attention to a curious appearance in the forest facing us. Looking in that direction, I saw to my surprise that the tops of the trees were lighted up with a strange glow. There was no moon, and the sun was not

yet risen, and I could not account for such a mysterious appearance. While wondering what it could possibly signify, there came tumbling down right in front of us, and as if from the sky, a great bundle of blazing stuff which was quickly followed by others. The mystery of the light in the tree tops was at once made plain. The Creeques had mounted the hill behind and above us, and were showering lighted bundles of dried grass and other inflammable materials down upon the abatis. We had, unfortunately, so constructed this defence that the front edge of it projected a little beyond the line of the overhanging rocks, we never for a moment thinking that this could in any way imperil the safety of our position. The Creeques had discovered this fault, and had known how to take advantage of it.

Before we could think of what to do, the abatis was on fire along its whole length, and the Creeques were out in the open yelling and insulting us, but not as yet venturing too near. My first idea was to endeavour to put out the fire, but this soon proved impossible. Our supply of water was limited, and had it been ever so abundant we had no means of carrying it to the fire in sufficient quantities to be of service. We brought wet earth in bagfuls from the pool and threw it on the flames, but this was of little avail, for the quantity we could get was small, owing to all that had been more readily obtainable having been before carried away to make the bank. So the fire burnt on, and very soon the heat became excessive. Fortunately there was no wind in our direction, and the top of the cavern, having an outward incline, all the smoke and a good deal of the heat were carried away from us, otherwise we should have been quickly suffocated, or baked as in an oven. As it was, and for a little time at least, the flames that were to have destroyed us served for our defence, for while the fire lasted in any strength the Creeques could not pass through it to get at us. We could see them dancing and gesticulating through the curtain of flame which stood between us and them, but they kept at a safe distance whilst the fire did their work in clearing a passage for them.

The fire made it impossible for us to man the rampart, and we were obliged to throw ourselves on the ground at the back of the cavern, and in the vicinity of the pool, with

the water of which we sprinkled ourselves from time to time. It was whilst lying here that I endeavoured to form some plan for coping with the new and unexpected danger with which we were now threatened. The abatis was in course of destruction, and the rampart would soon be gone, for, being roughly made of stones and earth loosely thrown on the back part of the abatis, it must sink and crumble away when the fire got beneath it. Then we should be defenceless, and, as soon as the Indians could enter the cavern, they would fall upon us in numbers and overwhelm us. It was clear that there was nothing for it but to fight to the last as best we could. The only thing left us to consider was in what form and position we should fight.

I looked about for a place where we could best make our last stand. I saw that, on one side of the cavern, there was a sort of corner, or angular recess, wherein we might post ourselves with more advantage than elsewhere. Thither I took my men, when the heat had somewhat abated, and arranged them in the order which I desired they should take when the time came. To the front of the position I put two ranks of spearmen, ten in each rank. The remainder I stationed behind them. The ground sloped slightly upwards towards the rock, and on the higher part I set as many crossbow-men as there was room for. These were to shoot over the heads of their comrades in front, and, when they could shoot no longer, fling away their bows and take to their axes and swords. The front rank of spearmen were to be ready to fall on one knee, and to present their spears to the approaching enemy in a sloping position, with the butts firmly planted against the ground. This mode of defence had recently been adopted by the Spaniards, and De Guzman, who greatly admired it, had fully instructed our Indians in it. The men in the second rank were to use their spears at long-arm over the heads of the kneeling front rank; those further behind were to be ready to fill up any gaps which might be made in the two front ranks.

This seemed to me the best disposition I could make of my small force. We presented to the enemy a very narrow front, but one which represented the full measure of our strength, and the greatest solidity obtainable. If we had

to die we would take more killing in this formation than in any other available to us at the moment.

Having made those arrangements, and given every man to thoroughly understand his position and his duties, I left each to pass the little remaining time as he pleased. Myself, with some of the crossbow-men, got as near to the front of the cavern as we could, with a view to keeping the enemy at bay as long as possible. The fire was now rapidly dying out for want of fuel. It had, as I expected, eaten in beneath the rampart, and brought it down in many places, making great gaps. The Creeques continued their dancing and rejoicing outside, and we sent them a shot from time to time, to let them know that we were on the alert, and make them think that we were ready for them when they ventured to advance. I merely desired to gain as much time as possible, being in no hurry to commence what I could not but regard as our death struggle, and always hoping that De Guzman might arrive to our assistance earlier than I had expected. So we kept moving about the front of the cavern to intimidate our foes. At the end of a couple of hours the fire was almost everywhere burnt out, and what had been the rampart was now a mere ridge of stones and earth, offering no sort of impediment to an advancing enemy.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Indians in the cavern—How we took their charge—Spears and bows—At close quarters—Many against few—Numbers prevailing—Hand to hand, and man to man—Choquo down—I try to save him—My life in danger—The negro to the rescue—A mighty blow—"Castilla! Castilla!"—De Guzman and his men—Flight of the Creeques—Congratulations—Pursuit and slaughter—State of the cavern—Rest and converse—Results of the expedition—The homeward march.

THE morning was well advanced when at last the Indians ceased their noise and dancing and drew themselves together for a rush. I called to my men to betake themselves to their station, detaining with me for a moment a few of our crossbow-men. After an interval of silence, and the adjustment of their ranks, the Creeques, with a great shout and a common movement, dashed forward in a solid mass. As they came on we discharged our bolts at them as fast as we could, knocking some of them over, and then made for our places in the corner of the cavern. We had but got well into it when the foremost of the enemy came yelling and leaping over the embers of the fire into the cavern. For a moment they paused as if to see what we were doing, and then, spying us out, dashed upon us with full fury.

The fight now began in earnest. Our kneeling men received the charging enemy on a firm line of long spears—a reception which seemed to puzzle the Creeques greatly, and divided their attention between the men who were kneeling inactive and those behind them, who, leaning over the front rank, were vigorously thrusting at all who came near. From behind these again were sped flights of bolts, doing great execution in the mass of Indians. The foe came at us with no better arms than stone hatchets and knives, flat clubs of hard and heavy wood and bows similarly used. For they brought no arrows, thinking no doubt (and not wrongly so) that the fighting would be mainly at

close quarters, and counting upon quickly overwhelming so small a number of enemies. But we had a great advantage in the way we were posted and marshalled, and in the narrowness of our front, for though there were hundreds of them trying to get at us, only a few could reach us at a time. Still, as we brought down those immediately in front of us, fresh men stepped into their places, and kept up the contest. In this way we had to deal with successive relays of warriors without pause or respite for us. So the battle went on with marked superiority on our side, so far as slaying was concerned. Numbers of the enemy fell, without serious loss on our part. Now and again one of our men of the front rank would fall, but instantly his place was supplied by another from behind. Our position could not be turned, and the harder we were pressed upon the more compact and solid we became. But the enemy could well afford to lose half-a-dozen men to one of ours, and overwhelm us in the end, so that our destruction appeared to be only a question of time, and that short, no matter how well we fought.

For a full half-hour the fight went on in this desperate fashion, with no sign of relenting on the part of our assailants, but, alas! with many growing signs of exhaustion on our side. During that time we had stoutly kept our ground and our formation, and inflicted very heavy losses on the enemy, but now so many of our own men were down that it began to be difficult to fill up the gaps made in the front ranks. The crossbow-men had thrown away their bows and taken to other weapons, for the fight was become so close that bows were useless. Our spears, too, were becoming unserviceable from the same cause. In brief, the battle had now become one of a man-to-man nature. The Creeques had, by mere weight of numbers, pressed us back against the rocks, as far as it was possible for us to go, and were simply exterminating us one after another.

It was whilst things were in this extremity that I saw at a little distance my trusty Choquo felled to the ground by a blow on the side of the head. The man who gave it to him at once seized him by the legs and commenced dragging him out of the thick of the fray, the more readily to slay him. I could not stand by and see this. My left

arm had been disabled before then by a blow on the shoulder, but I had the full use of my right arm, so, with sword in hand, I dashed upon the Indian and ran him through the body. Choquo lay insensible on the ground, but I stood over him and kept the Indians for a moment at bay. But this did not last long, for one of them came swiftly behind me and taking me unawares, gave me such a terrible blow on the head as to crush in my stout helmet and stretch me powerless, and almost senseless, on the ground. The same, or another Indian, at once threw himself upon me, and, with one hand tearing open my quilted mail, raised a broad flint knife in the other hand to plunge it into my bared throat. Before he had time to give the stroke, the great negro dashed in upon him, axe in hand, and struck him such a quick and mighty blow upon his extended neck as caused his head to fly off as if he had been decapitated by a practised headsman. The headless body fell upon me, and all the blood it contained gushed over me as if from a fountain, almost choking me.

It was at this precise moment that there appeared to ring in my ears the Spanish cry of "Castilla! Castilla!" but I was so dazed and bewildered as not to marvel much at the sound, or realise its meaning. But the cry being repeated nearer and nearer, and with it coming a new kind of uproar, I roused myself and sat up to look around. The sight was a joyful and inspiring one. There were three horsemen—one De Guzman, on his powerful stallion, and the others, two Cargutah lords—charging amongst the Indians, at whose mercy we so lately lay. Some way behind them, a great body of our well-equipped Cherokees were pressing forward to the support of the horsemen. Before I could stagger to my feet our friends were clearing all before them, bearing down every opposition and driving the Creeques about like scattered sheep. The surprise had been complete, and the Creeques were in no heart to make a stand against those new and numerous enemies; and probably the sight of the horsemen added to their amazement and dismay.

Leaving his men to continue the pursuit of the enemy De Guzman made haste to search me out, and having found me was delighted to learn that I was not seriously hurt, though I presented such a sanguinary appearance.

My left arm remained powerless for many days, and had to be braced over my chest with strips of skin. There was an ugly gash on my right cheek, inflicted probably by a flying hatchet; and my head was sore and swollen from the force of the blow I had received upon it. But for the strength of my helmet my skull would certainly have been smashed in. In mind I was still dazed and dull when De Guzman came to me, and I could scarcely understand his presence or reciprocate his joy at the meeting between us. But seeing that I was safe and in no danger, he mounted his horse and rode away to join his men, but left behind some fifty of them to take charge of the cavern in his absence, and guard against a surprise from any concealed body of enemies.

Having satisfied my thirst at the pool, and washed and cleaned myself as well as I could, and made such changes in my raiment as were possible, I felt myself in much better case, and in a short time able to attend to such duties as awaited me. I was gratified to find that Choquo was little the worse for his injuries, and that my friend the negro, to whom I certainly owed my life, was one of the few of our party who had escaped unhurt. On examining the cavern, I found that at the part where the fighting had taken place the ground was a mere quagmire of blood, covered with dead and wounded men. I set a party to work sorting out the dead from the living, strictly prohibiting scalping or ill-treatment of the wounded. The bodies of the slain were dragged to one side, and all the wounded were taken to the cleaner end of the cavern, where such attention as was possible was given to them, friend and foe being treated alike. Their great and more immediate want was water, and this I caused to be freely supplied to them from the pool.

On examining into our losses, I found that seven of our men were slain outright, and over a score wounded badly. The rest had escaped wholly or with but slight injuries. This was a heavy loss proportionate to our numbers, but I had thought it to be more, considering the nature of the combat and the numbers we had opposed to us. Ultimately all our wounded recovered with the exception of two, so that our total loss in the battle amounted to nine. On the side of the enemy over thirty

were killed, and the wounded who had not been able to get away numbered twice as many. Of the latter, a large proportion died before we left, for the wounds inflicted by our weapons were nearly all of a serious character. In all, the Creeques lost in this fight about fifty or sixty warriors, not counting those who might have got away though wounded, or been carried off by their friends, and afterwards dying of their wounds. Neither did I attempt to make any estimate of the losses of the Creeques after they had been put to the rout by De Guzman's troops; but from what I afterwards heard, I thought the numbers so slain must have been far in excess of the slaughter in the cavern.

In the afternoon De Guzman came back with his forces, and told of what he had done. Having chased the Creeques through the forest and killed every man they could overtake, he had gone on to the plain and advanced to the town. They found it had been hastily abandoned. It was entered and plundered by our men, who took whatever was worth carrying away, and then set it on fire and destroyed it. Amongst the plunder, our Indians secured two Spanish swords, which the Spaniards we had rescued claimed as having belonged to them before they were made prisoners. These were esteemed a valuable acquisition. One of them De Guzman took for himself, and the other he gave to me, the Spaniards being compensated by receiving our weapons by way of exchange. I did not altogether approve of the destruction of the Creeque town, though I said nothing on the subject to De Guzman. After all, we were clearly the aggressors in what had taken place; and though our motives were good, it was not unnatural on the part of the Creeques to resent our proceedings and seek to punish us for our attack upon them. What else took place was more or less in the nature of fair fighting, and it did not seem to me that for anything they had done, from first to last, the Creeques merited exceptional punishment. But the Spaniards had always been intolerant and merciless towards the Indians, and were so in Florida, notwithstanding all the efforts of De Soto to restrain them.

We stayed three days by the cavern, to enable the troops to rest and refresh themselves, and give our wounded time to get better. During those days, De Guzman and myself had plenty of opportunities for mutual narrative. He told

me how he had left Cargutah the second day after my departure from there, with two hundred and fifty well-armed and well-equipped men, and had followed in our track as far as the river. There he was much pleased to find rafts ready for him to cross with, which was a great saving of time. It was after he had advanced some distance from the river that my mounted messenger came up to him and told him all that had taken place, and how we had taken up our position in a cavern, expecting an attack. This caused him to hasten his march more than ever, for he judged we were in great danger, and must be relieved promptly, if at all. He arrived just in time to save us from destruction. The rest I have told.

He expressed his great contentment with the results of the expedition as a whole. It is true that we had lost about a dozen men in the successful rescue of five, but two of the five were Spaniards and of more importance to us than scores of Indians, and a third was a negro, accustomed to civilized ways, and hardly less valuable than a white man. These (not to consider the two Indians) De Guzman regarded as vastly more than an equivalent for the men we had lost, whose places could readily be supplied. He also esteemed highly the experience our people had gained of the advantages of making war under the system they had recently adopted. They now saw how superior they had become to other Indians, and how enormously greater their fighting strength was to what it had been before. On his part, as practically the king of the Cherokees, he had found by actual experience that his people made good soldiers on the European model, and were to be relied upon for a military capacity which opened a field to great possibilities. In all of which I agreed with him, though I still doubted if he had all the materials to realise his dream of founding a civilized and powerful Indian empire.

In the course of the next day or two I sent away some of the Creeques, who had got better of their wounds, to find their brethren where they could, and let them know that, after our departure, they were free to come and take charge themselves of their own wounded. I thought that having helped those people so far it would be a shame to abandon them at the last moment, and only consistent with what we had already done to give them a chance of being

taken charge of by their own friends. As for our own wounded, they were doing very well, and none of them were so badly hurt as to be incapable of returning with the army at the appointed time.

The day before our departure from the cavern Choquo was sent on in advance of us to convey to our friends in Cargutah early news of our adventures, and of our speedy return. With him we despatched a company of ten men, under a sergeant, to see to the rafts, so that there might be no unnecessary delay in our passage of the river. The next morning we set out on our homeward march, proceeding leisurely for the greater ease of our wounded.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The story of the negro—His island home with the Barbary Moor—Startling disclosure—A litter of pigs—Death of the Moor, and capture of the negro—Importance of the story—Decision to search for the island and the pigs—I take a detachment, and part with De Guzman—A rough journey—A well-built raft—The island reached—The pigs found and secured—Food and rest—Down the river—March to Cargutah.

ON our march back to Cargutah I kept the negro near me to help me in difficult places, for, owing to my disabled left arm, I could not well manage my horse in such situations. This gave me opportunities of questioning and conversing with him (though he spoke Spanish badly), and I took an interest in doing so, because I felt grateful to him for having saved my life in the late battle. He told me about his having been a chief in his own land in Africa, and how, having been made prisoner by his enemies, he was brought down to the sea with many others, and put into a ship and brought to Cuba, where he laboured as a slave for three years, before his master joined the army of De Soto, and took him with him to Florida. He told me of his flight from the army with the Barbary Moor, and of their many adventures thereafter in the swamps and woods. He also told me how they had at last made themselves a home, and found a refuge in the island in the river (as already mentioned), being, they thought, a good place in which to conceal themselves both from the Spaniards and the Indians. There, being provided with hatchets and knives, they had built themselves a good house of logs and bark, and settled themselves very comfortably. Fish they could catch in abundance; but the island being flat and of no great size, though covered with trees and bushes, there was not much game there and none of a large size. So, for a change of diet, they had to cross to one side or the other of

the river, and going into the forest kill deer, and such other game as they could, with their bows and arrows, and by snares and traps such as they could devise. The better to do this they had built for themselves a kind of boat, or raft, with long oars and poles, the Moor having a knowledge of this kind of work. By means of this vessel they were able very easily to pass to and fro between the island and the shores whenever they pleased, and to bring home with them all the meat they desired to carry across. They had found places of concealment for their vessel both on the island and on the banks opposite to it, and they were careful never to venture out upon the river except after sunset or before dawn, preferring, when necessary, to pass a whole day or a whole night in the forest rather than run the risk of being discovered by the Indians navigating their vessel by daylight on the open water.

The negro then went on to tell me a thing of much interest and importance. During one of their excursions on the mainland, and while they were waiting to return to the island under cover of darkness, they were surprised at hearing the grunting of swine close to the place where they lay concealed. On going cautiously in the direction of the sound, they saw a large sow wallowing in a muddy place, and near her six little ones rooting about in search of food. The sow, becoming aware of their presence, started up and made through the forest, followed by her young. Thereupon the negro drew his bow and sent an arrow deep into her side, but this did not stop her course, and she and the young ones disappeared through the trees. The hunters followed in her track, which was all the way spotted with blood, and at last came to a great tree, amongst the roots of which the sow had made her lair. Within this den there lay the mother in a dying state, with the little ones clamouring around her. The negro despatched the mother with his knife, and then made haste to secure the young ones alive, thinking they would be very useful for stocking the island, and supplying them in the future with plenty of meat at their own door. One by one he secured the young pigs, and, tying their feet together, carried them to the raft, and there deposited them. All this he had to do single-handed, for the Moor refused to help him. No doubt this was because he was a

Mahomedan or a Jew, who hold swine to be unclean animals, and will not willingly touch them. The black man had no such scruples, and, having made sure of the little ones, he cut up and carried away piecemeal the carcass of the mother, being unwilling, as he said, to see so much good meat wasted. When they got back to the island the young pigs were let loose, and, being old enough to provide for themselves, they soon became at home there, finding good food amongst the trees and bushes, and being also fed by the negro with fish and other things. The sow must, of course, have been one of the herd of swine which De Soto had brought all the way from the coast. In spite of all precautions some of them had strayed away during the difficulties of the march and been lost. This sow, being in young at the time she had wandered away, had made for herself a home in the woods, and there brought with her progeny.

The negro further narrated how, after a time, the Moor was taken with fever and ague, and died; and how he had buried him in the sand at an end of the island. It happened soon after that he himself, being on the mainland, was surprised while asleep in the woods by a party of Indians, who bound him and carried him away to the place where we had found him ten days after his capture. Of the boat and of his home in the island he supposed the Indians knew nothing, for they seemed to have come upon him as if by chance, and not as by previous knowledge and plan.

Now it had, from the first, been an ardent desire of mine that we might at some time or another come upon stray animals—horses, swine, dogs—of De Soto's army. I thought if we could establish breeds of such creatures at Cargutah the advantage would be enormous to a people absolutely without domestic animals of any sort, though having abundance of food for their maintenance. We had been fortunate in finding horses, and now it seemed likely that we were about to become possessed of swine. At any rate, the possible opportunity of doing so was not to be missed, and I resolved to take the fullest advantage of it. When I told De Guzman all that I had heard from the negro about the pigs, he fully agreed with me that the matter was one of the utmost importance to us, and that

every effort should be made to find the island of the negro, and get possession of the young pigs.

On questioning our Indians, we learnt that there was no river in that quarter at all corresponding in size and direction to the one the negro had described, except that towards which we were marching, and had before crossed on our way to the country of the Creeques. When again we came to it, the negro, after having carefully considered it, declared his belief that it was the same river. From its size and from its direction, and from what he could remember of distances, he was convinced it was the same river in which his island was situated. The island would be higher up the stream, and, he thought, not very far away from the place where our rafts were. It was accordingly decided that an attempt should be made to find it.

We crossed to the other side of the river on our rafts, in good order and without mishap, thus placing the river between us and any foe which might possibly pursue us; though we feared none such, nor thought it likely that we should be followed by an enemy whom we had so completely beaten and dispersed. However, it is always best in military matters to neglect no precaution. On the other side of the river we formed a strong temporary camp, determining to remain for some days for the benefit of our wounded and the repose and refreshment of all the force. Here De Guzman and myself considered how best to set about seeking the island and securing the pigs. We did not think it necessary to employ any large force in this task, nor were we of the opinion that it was desirable to delay the return home of the main part of our army on account of the search for the island. It was arranged, then, that I should undertake the expedition with three companies of ten men each, and that De Guzman should go on to Cargutah with the rest of the force. So, after three full days in camp, De Guzman set out with his men, taking with him my horse, which I did not think would be serviceable to me in my present undertaking. As our journey lay up stream, the rafts could be of no use to us, as we had no proper means of navigating them against the current, though it was not very strong. They were, therefore, broken up and destroyed. Our way must be by the side of the river, and we made our arrangements

accordingly. We met with many difficulties on the journey, owing to creeks and swamps and marshy places, thickly overgrown with reeds and canes much higher than ourselves, and with all sorts of bushes, weeds, and wild undergrowth; also full of water-fowl and divers beasts. Sometimes we had to make wide detours to gain higher ground; but all this is in the nature of travelling in Florida when near a river, as I had before experienced.

After two days' very rough and laborious travelling we came at length to an open beach by the side of the river, beyond which there was a bend of the stream and a wide part. In the middle of the wide part we spied a good-sized island, half-a-mile long or more, bushy, and well wooded. This, the negro told us, was the island of which he had spoken. In proof thereof he took us about a mile further along the shore to a place facing the middle of the island, and there, from under the overhanging bushes of the bank, he drew forth the boat-raft which he and the Moor had made, and which had lain there undiscovered since his capture by the Indians. We lost no time in getting the vessel ready for crossing to the island. I, with the negro and one company, got into it, leaving Choquo and the other two companies to keep guard by the bank of the river.

The raft was very well put together, and so constructed as to be easily manageable by a couple of men, though it was of good size. I took particular notice of it, not only because of certain peculiarities in its construction, but also thinking it would serve as a model for some vessels I desired to have in use on the river of Cargutah, where we had at present only one raft, which was heavy and difficult of management. This raft of the negro was pointed at each end, and had raised sides of split wood. The bottom was made of three tree-trunks, the middle one being thicker and longer than the other two, which (with the help of the hatchet) gave to the raft the pointed shape at each end. The trunks were securely fastened together by many cross-pieces of split wood, securely pegged to the trunks, and also tied to them and to each other by cordage and thongs of skin. The whole was very solid and compact, and though no attempt had been made to caulk the bottom or make it watertight, the inside of the raft was perfectly dry,

for the tree-trunks floated high out of the water, and the cross-pieces of split wood made a dry and tolerably even floor. The two long oars, or sweeps, employed to propel it were made after the fashion of those used by the slaves in galleys, and though somewhat roughly finished, answered very well their purpose. The negro said that the design of the vessel was that of the Moor, but he had assisted in making it, though in doing so they were much embarrassed for want of metal nails. This embarrassment we were able to avoid when afterwards, at Cargutah, I had three such boat-rafts constructed on the same plan (but with some improvements), which turned out very useful.

Arrived at the island, the negro took us to his house, which was a very substantial and good-sized building of logs covered with bark and reeds, all the openings between the logs being filled up with dried moss. Inside, the first thing we saw, and heard, too, was the litter of pigs spoken of by the negro. They had taken possession, in his absence, of his bed of reeds and dry grass in one corner of the hut, from which they were now hurrying in alarm at our approach. But they soon became tame enough, and showed their remembrance of their negro keeper and feeder, and more especially so when he proceeded to feed them with some thick, dark roots, which he took from a shelf where he had a number of them. These were the same kind of roots which Choquo had once before procured in our wanderings, and which, being roasted, I found excellent to eat. Before we left, the negro baked a number of them in hot ashes, and, with them and some freshly-caught fish from the river, we had quite a good feast. I stopped that night at the negro's hut, sending word of my intention to Choquo, so as not to alarm him by my absence.

Next morning, having all breakfasted heartily, after the manner of the night before, we set to considering the best method of carrying away the young pigs. After a little discussion, it was settled that small baskets should be made of strong cane and willows, each to carry a pig. These were soon finished, as the materials grew in great profusion around the borders of the island, and both the Indians and the negro were very expert in working them. I hesitated much as to our mode of return to Cargutah—whether we

should go down the river in the boat-raft to the place where our forces had crossed, and then follow the track of De Guzman to Cargutah, or whether we should strike a more direct course from our present place on the river. On consulting with Choquo and the Indians they all agreed that the better plan would be to go down the river by boat-raft, for, though the distance was greater, the way was easier and better known to us. For myself, I dreaded the swampy country, and as it was uncertain how far inland it extended in this part, I decided to keep to the water for the first part of the journey, as the Indians advised. This being settled upon, we quickly made a second raft, as we were too many for the one; and taking the new one in tow of the other, we all embarked, and went rapidly down stream. In less than half a day we reached our old crossing-place, and here we disembarked and cast the rafts adrift, having no further use for them. The negro had come with us of his own free choice, for I had given him full liberty to decide for himself whether he should join us as a free man, and no longer a slave, or remain independent and alone in the wilderness. I was glad he decided to remain with us, for I knew he would be useful in teaching the Indians the proper management of the pigs and the horses, and a hundred other things. The young pigs were not the only things of use which we brought away with the negro. We secured two good hatchets and a couple of large Spanish steel knives, so that our expedition to the island was altogether satisfactory and profitable.

From the crossing-place of the river we set out for Cargutah, following the former track, and on the evening of the second day we arrived home without mishap, where we received a hearty welcome from our friends. The appearance of the negro caused much surprise, and not less interest was manifested in the curious little creatures we had brought back with us. Great satisfaction was expressed by the cacique, and all the lords and leading Indians, at the success of the expedition as a whole. The results were considered (and I think reasonably so) to have advanced and justified the wise and far-seeing policy which the cacique had adopted for the improvement and civilization of his people.

It is needless to say how pleased I was to see Aymay

again, and she me, after all the adventures of the last few days, in the course of which I had had good reason to fear that I should never again behold her. Under her care and that of some of the Indian medicine women, my recovery from my wounds and bruises was rapidly completed, and in a short time I was as busy as ever about my workshops and my workmen.

CHAPTER XXX.

A retrospect—Changes at Cargutah—An industrial hive—Wisdom of the cacique—Position of De Guzman—The Spanish soldiers—Their utility—The negro and his duties—The soldiers' account of the army—The salt lake—Attack by Indians—Barbarity of Moscoso—A reconciliation—Mysterious river flood—Fire and sword and chains—Submission of the cacique of Naguatex—Wandering westward to find white settlers—Incompetent interpreters, and doubtful intelligence—Torturing for truth and getting lies—A horrible desert—Starvation and treachery—Indian given to hungry dogs—A land of hunters—Buffalo meat and hides—Left the army—After adventures of the two Spaniards—End of their story—They believe the army destroyed.

WHEN I look back over the many pages I have written I can see there are several things I have not described at all, in addition to many others I have only lightly dealt with. It could not well be otherwise, for if I were to attempt to set everything down, and that with full or even moderate measure, this narrative would be of intolerable length either to write or to read. Still, I should like to have found space for some more personal and domestic details about myself and my wife, De Guzman and his wife, the cacique, and many of our good Indian friends. I should also like to have described some more of the multitude of mechanical and other improvements which followed upon those already mentioned, and how one thing of the kind led to another, and often to several others, in a wonderful way, and of the important result of all these to our community. But I must content myself with saying generally that great changes had been wrought throughout the whole of the valley of Cargutah, and that the aspect of native society there had been marvellously altered. By means of improved ploughs, spades, and other implements, much new land had been brought under cultivation, and corn and other kinds of food were almost in superfluous

abundance. My particular village had become like a little Sheffield where work was going on all day long, and men were ever busy in casting, forging and smithy work, in grinding knives, weapons, and implements of one kind or another, and in making pottery. All the large houses there, which were vacant on my coming, were now used as workshops or stores, and a number of other buildings had been put up for similar uses. In the hills, and on the slopes on both sides of the river, men were daily employed in burning charcoal, lime, bricks and pottery; others were getting minerals, felling trees, carting materials, and so forth. By the river there was plenty to be done—such as loading and unloading the rafts and boats which brought minerals from the far side, getting the blue clay which was so useful to us in many ways, making salt at the brine springs. There was so much to be done, and so many things to learn, that no one was permitted to be idle without good excuse; nor indeed was there any indisposition shown on the part of all who were capable, nor any marked inability to profit by teaching, though the previous ignorance of the Indians in almost every art was far below that of an ordinary European child of ten.

As a natural consequence of all this the people of the valley of Cargutah were now well fed, well lodged, and in all respects well accommodated. In effect they were rich and prosperous, if richness and prosperity consist in having an abundance and to spare of all the necessaries and comforts of life, and in possessing the means of maintaining and increasing their supply to a practically limitless extent. Heretofore the Indians had at best but a sufficiency of things the more essential to their subsistence, and sometimes (as the cacique told us) even these were deficient, and the people suffered much. Now they had all they wanted for the present, and could lay by great stores of corn and dried and salted meats, and were happy in the possession of many good things which before they knew nothing of because of their ignorance and their half-barbarous state. In addition to what they were able to make or grow or get for themselves by the new arts they had learnt, they procured in exchange with neighbouring tribes a great many other things, and this kind of trade was one which was growing in magnitude from day to day.

This state of things was what the wise old cacique had been vaguely thinking of when he first resolved to try and secure for his people a knowledge of the arts and methods of the wonderful white men who had come into the country. He had, he told me, succeeded beyond his expectations, and now his hopes were higher than ever, because of the two more white men and the negro (who was almost as good as a third), and also because of having horses and pigs. To me the old chief was always most gracious, for he thought I had helped most to promote the civilization of his people. Of his son-in-law, De Guzman, he was proud, looking upon him as a worthy successor to himself, who would make the Cherokee nation greater and more powerful than he could ever have done. And when his daughter, Winona, had a son born to her, the old chief wanted to retire and have De Guzman proclaimed king in his stead; but of this De Guzman would not hear, swearing in his lofty way that the old man should die as he had lived, king of his people. In effect it made no difference, for De Guzman was king already for every practical purpose, and was so regarded by the lords and the people. De Guzman was warlike and impetuous, but the cacique, at least now in his old age, believed in peace as the true nurse of civilization; and seeing in me (though so much younger) a man of a similar disposition, he valued me accordingly, without thinking the less of De Guzman.

The Spanish soldiers we had rescued turned out good citizens and useful men in our community. One had been brought up to the trade of a carpenter and shipwright, and the other came from Andalusia, where his family were cultivators. Each in his way knew a great many things useful for our people to learn, and I was very glad to have their help as directors and overlookers in our various trades and industries, as I had more on my hands than I could properly see to. Very soon after they had come amongst us the cacique assigned each of them a wife, daughters of Indian lords, and their marriage was performed by De Guzman, in his clerical capacity, and was celebrated with a great feast in the cacique's own house. The negro, too, was allowed and encouraged to take a wife from amongst the Indian maidens. He, too, was useful to us in a multitude of ways, but I put upon him the special duty of taking care of the

horses and pigs, a duty with which he was familiar, and which he did very well.

I got from the two Spaniards, soon after they were settled at Cargutah, an account of what they knew of the movements of the army from the time of our latest news of it, that is, from the time when the new Governor Luis de Moscoso, abandoning his efforts to bring De Guzman back, marched away once more towards the west. The Spaniards told us that the army first came to the borders of a very salt lake, where the natives, by means of small earthen pans, made cakes of salt, which they exchanged with neighbouring tribes for food, skins, and other things. After that they came, 20th July, 1542, to a country or province called Naguatex, where their camp was attacked by two strong bands of allied Indians. They were beaten back, but some horsemen going in pursuit of them were caught in an ambush of two other bands of Indians, and narrowly escaped destruction. One Indian who was made prisoner was barbarously treated by order of the enraged Moscoso, his nose and right arm being cut off. In this pitiful condition he was sent away with a message to the cacique that on the following day he would enter his country and destroy it with fire and sword. But next morning, on his march to carry out this threat, he came to a large river, and beheld on the opposite bank the cacique and a large force of natives ready to oppose his passage. The Spaniards did not know the fords, and could not attempt to force a passage without such knowledge. So they fell back and encamped for a few days in a pleasant wood, whilst the horsemen were employed in finding out where the river could best be forded. During this delay the anger of Moscoso abated, and he thought it as well to try negotiations with the enemy. These succeeded so well that the cacique crossed the river, with a number of his people, and had an interview with the Governor. The cacique excused himself for the unprovoked attack upon the Spaniards, for which he blamed one of his brothers, who had been killed in the fight. He admitted the Spaniards were divine people and invincible, and offered to help Moscoso with guides and supplies of food. The Governor accepted those offers, and exhorting the cacique to continue in his present mind, dismissed him with a few presents. Four days afterwards

Moscoso prepared to cross the river, but the Spaniards found, to their surprise, that the water had risen to a great height, though no rain had fallen for a month. Some thought that the river must come from a great distance where heavy rain had fallen; others, that the rise was due to a flux of the sea, which could not be far off. But the natives, on being questioned, knew nothing of a sea, and had never even heard of such a body of water. However, after the lapse of eight days the water abated sufficiently to enable the army to pass over. They found a fertile country on the other side, but on advancing to the chief town they discovered it to be abandoned. In the interval which had elapsed the cacique had changed his mind, and now refused all assistance. Thereupon Moscoso caused several villages to be burnt, wasted the country, and made slaves of all the natives he could capture. Then the cacique, to save the land from further destruction, made submission and gave hostages for his good faith. He supplied guides who knew the way and the languages of the countries through which the army was to pass going westward.

The Spaniards wandered in that direction for weeks and months, passing through province after province, mostly populous and fertile, but sometimes barren, and almost uninhabited; meeting with various adventures, enduring great hardships, and always buoyed up with the hope that they were getting nearer and nearer to Mexico and their countrymen. They constantly inquired from the Indians they met with about white men, and from time to time they seemed to get favourable answers. In one district they saw some of the houses surmounted with wooden crosses, and these they took for a sure sign that Spanish influence had penetrated that far. But some of the Spaniards (amongst them the two who gave us this account) thought that such indications, and the information they got from the Indians, were unreliable and delusive. It was doubtful (they thought) if the strange Indians understood the questions put to them, and doubtful, too, if the Spaniards got the correct version of the replies. To begin with, the Spaniards had to rely upon an Indian boy, from a country far to the east, who had only a partial knowledge of Spanish, and, probably, even less knowledge of the western Indian dialects. Then questions and answers had to pass through

several other interpreters, not well acquainted with each others' language. At times, too, there were grounds for suspecting bad faith and intentional misrepresentation on the part of informants or interpreters; so that, on the whole, our two Spanish friends, and those of the army who agreed with them, had good reason for believing that there was a total want of reliable information as to the presence of white men in the west, and for fearing that the army was marching to its destruction, under the influence of a delusive and false belief. Still, Moscoso, and most of the Spaniards, were loth to abandon the hope that they were getting nearer and nearer to Mexico, or to regions colonized from thence by their countrymen, where they would escape from the danger of perishing in a trackless wilderness. Thus the westward march was prolonged, the Spaniards being sometimes cheered with news of the vicinity of white men, sometimes depressed and bewildered by being assured that no such people were known, or had ever been heard of. On one of the latter occasions Moscoso was so enraged at what he was pleased to consider the falsehoods of the Indians, that he had several of them tortured by the rack, which only had the effect of extorting replies more acceptable, yet more misleading than before.

At length the army was conducted into a vast and horrible desert where it wandered about for many days until all its provisions were exhausted and the men were reduced to eating whatever they could find in the way of herbs and roots. After much suffering and some losses, they suddenly discovered, to their dismay, that they had, under the leadership of an old Indian guide, been journeying in a great circle. The guide confessed that he had acted under the order of his cacique, and though he promised, if his life was spared, to conduct the army in three days to a fertile country, Moscoso was too furious to spare him, and he was delivered over to the dogs, who, ravenous with hunger, soon tore him to pieces. This (said our informants) did not greatly mend matters, for the Spaniards endured many more days of suffering before they escaped from this desert. At last they reached a ridge of high ground from which they could see in the distance certain scattered habitations. On coming up to these, they found them to be mere temporary huts of reeds and bark,

seemingly used by hunters. They saw no people about, but the huts were plentifully stocked with fresh buffalo meat, which the starving Spaniards soon fell upon and devoured. There were also in the huts many shaggy hides of buffaloes, and to this province the Spaniards gave the name of Vaqueros, or Herdsmen.

It was whilst in this province, with the prospects of equal or worse hardships for the troops, whether they went forward or turned back, that our two Spaniards lost sight of the army. Their own account was that they strayed into a forest in search of game, lost their way, and could not get out of it for three days, when they emerged at a place where they could find no sign or trace of the army. Abandoning all hope of rejoining their comrades, they determined to return towards the east and endeavour to make their way towards the Rio Grande, hoping to meet with some friendly Indians who would afford them an asylum, and, perhaps, assist them to get out of the country. They had heard of De Guzman's reception by the Indians, for it was long the talk of the army, and they thought, if they might have the good fortune to reach where he was, they would find a refuge from further hardships and dangers. With this design they had slowly proceeded eastwards, exercising every precaution to avoid hostile Indians. They had many adventures, sometimes staying with friendly Indians for months at a time, and at others meeting with bad receptions, and running great danger of losing their lives. As they neared the parts by which the Spaniards had passed, they found it harder and harder to conciliate the natives, such was the bad impression left by the Spaniards. At last they were made prisoners and enslaved by an Indian tribe, and for a long time treated with great brutality. However, by submission, and trying to please their masters in every way, they secured better treatment for themselves, and in time came to be regarded as important members of the tribe. Whilst aiding their adopted friends in a war against another tribe, they were taken prisoners, and ultimately conveyed to the place where we found them about to be sacrificed at the sun-dance of the Creeques.

Such was the account given of the army by our two friends. They were of opinion that Moscoso and his men

were by that time dead. Either they had perished in the unknown and boundless wildernesses of the Far West, or they had made a desperate and too tardy effort to retrace their steps, in a condition of weakness and impoverishment so extreme as to make it impossible they could ever survive the hardships of the tremendous journey and the hostilities of the exasperated Indians.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Rumours of war—Indian confederation against us—Tuscaluza raising an army—We prepare for invasion—All efficients called out—Preparations for defending the town alone—Sinking a well—Plan for flooding the country—Review of our forces—The enemy advancing—De Guzman takes the field—I command the town in his absence—State of the old cacique.

FOR some months after the termination of our hostilities against the Creeques our life of peace and industry went on in the usual way, undisturbed by troubles within or dangers from without. At last rumours began to reach us which made us think that our quietude was about to be disturbed, and that the chapter of our differences with the Creeques was not closed, as we had hoped and supposed. News of our doings in peace and war had spread abroad, and attracted widespread attention to us. It was now generally known that Spanish influence predominated in our valley, and the nature and effects of that influence (especially as illustrated in the case of the Creeques) were such as to arouse the suspicions and jealousies of the Indian nations, near and remote. The conduct of the Spaniards of the army had, as a rule, been such as to provoke resentment rather than encourage friendship and confidence. It was to be expected that, in any event, their armed appearance in Florida would alarm native populations, to whom they were strange and outlandish, and who might well believe that their coming boded no good to the actual occupants of the country. But when to those natural grounds of distrust were added the actual high-handed proceedings of the Spaniards—their slayings and cruelties, their plunderings and destructions of houses and fields, their outrages and enslavements—the original distrust gave place to bitter hatred and general hostility. Some few communities of Indians endeavoured to keep on

friendly terms with the invader because of their helplessness; others, whose passions had not been aroused by unpardonable wrongs or bloody conflicts, were (like the Cherokees) really edified by the superior civilization of the Spaniards, and friendly enough disposed towards them. But exceptions such as these were insignificant, and the general feeling was one of hatred, partly based on prejudice against the foreigners, partly owing to evil reports, but mainly due to the misbehaviour of the Spaniards themselves. This hatred had been extended and intensified by the exertions of influential Indian caciques like Ucita and Tuscaluza—especially the latter, who had organized hostilities against the Spaniards far and near.

It seemed, then, that when it became known that the Cherokee nation was reforming itself on a Spanish basis, with the guidance and assistance of Spaniards, and had recently defeated the powerful Creeques, the feeling of alarm and resentment became widespread amongst all those Indians who were hostile to Spanish influence in every shape and form. Such was the nature of the reports brought to us by our own Indians, and by others coming to trade with us. As soon as we heard of those things, we took means for keeping ourselves as well informed as possible as to what was going on in the outer world of interest to us. Soon we heard that a combination was being organized against us. The Creeques, bent upon revenge, and unable to gratify it against us single-handed, were active in promoting this combination, representing that their cause was a national one, and that our effacement was for the interest of all Florida. Later on we became aware that they had sent emissaries to Tuscaluza and other caciques, who had warmly entered into their views, and had resolved upon making war upon the Cherokees.

Having made sure upon those points, we saw that a great crisis had arisen in our affairs, and that the most strenuous exertions were necessary to save us from destruction. Frequent councils were held to consider the reports as they came in, and devise means of defence. No decisive action was, however, taken until we learnt that Tuscaluza himself had come from his own country at the head of a great force, and, advancing in a north-westerly direction, had marched towards the Rio Grande. At the

Rio Grande a multitude of large canoes and rafts had been collected, and by means of these his army had crossed the river, and quartered itself in villages on the other side, waiting the arrival of other bodies of Indians.

At this news we set about preparing ourselves in earnest for the threatened invasion of our valley and the life and death struggle it would involve. At a great council of Indian lords from all parts of the valley, De Guzman exposed the gravity of the situation, pointing out how unsafe it would be to depend solely upon repulsing the invaders in the field, and how our main reliance must be in the strength of the capital town. What might or could be done to check the advance of the enemy must be left for circumstances to decide, but steps must at once be taken to ensure the safety of the town against any attack which might be directed against it, and to enable it to hold out as long as the enemy remained in the neighbourhood. The Indians all agreed that this was the wisest course. Then De Guzman secured their approval of the general plan he purposed adopting. All the efficient men throughout the valley were to be put under arms, ready for any service that might be required of them; the rest, with the women and children, should be sent to the upper end of the valley on the appearance of the enemy, where, under guard of a moderate force, they would be comparatively secure and out of the way of the invaders, for there there was nothing but a wilderness of rocks and defiles, marshes and tangled woods, offering great difficulties to an enemy.

In regard to the actual defences of the capital there was not much to be done, for these were new and solid, thanks to De Guzman's foresight and military genius, and thanks also to our brickmaking and other industries. Such improvements, alterations, and additions as a careful survey suggested were promptly taken in hand and soon finished. The rules which De Guzman had laid down for regular watch and ward of the wall and gateways were strictly enforced, and were sufficient, if observed, to render a surprise of the town impossible. Thus our plans contemplated the abandonment of the open villages to the enemy. This was inevitable, for none of them were defensible against such a force as we expected to come against us, nor could we spare men enough to defend

them. I looked forward with much sorrow to the probable destruction of my village, with our comfortable home and its many workshops and stores. But all must be sacrificed to the necessity of concentrating our forces in the chief town. Thither great quantities of corn in the grain were carried, and thither I had our mill removed and set up, so that we might grind the corn as we wanted it for bread. The flour itself we could not safely store, for I had found that, when kept in large quantities for any length of time, it was liable to a sort of change which made it as insipid as sawdust and quite unfit for food. I also brought into the town all our stores of weapons and implements of metal, whether iron, bronze, or copper. I determined to keep our works going as long as possible for the manufacture of arms, and as fast as these were turned out they were carried away to the town. Of food and of arms we should have enough to last us as long as would probably be necessary.

The state of our water supply in the town was far from satisfactory. From its isolated situation on a low mound there was no natural flow of water to the town, and the natives were in the habit of procuring what they required by carrying it in earthen and wooden vessels from the river. It would certainly not do to depend upon this source of supply in the case of invasion, for if we were shut up in the town by an overwhelming force of enemies we should perish for want of water. At first we thought of forming a large tank and filling it with water from the river, but were daunted by the magnitude and difficulties of such an undertaking. While the matter was still unsettled, and a cause of great anxiety to us, it came out that there was in one part of the town an old well which had long been disused, and which, though choked up with rubbish, still showed signs of having water in it. On examining the place we found that the well was situated in the lowest part of the town, on the side next the river, at the spot most likely to have water beneath the surface. We had it cleared out and found it of no great depth, but still yielding a certain flow of water. It appeared to be a very ancient structure, and originally made by a people who were not mere barbarians, for the interior of the well was smooth and round, and built up straight with blocks of cut

stone, closely fitting one to the other. According to Cherokee tradition this country once belonged to a more civilized people who were great builders and practised many useful arts, a knowledge of which had not come down to their successors. Many things were absurdly attributed to those older people (such as the making of hills and even mountains), but there were several things (besides this old well) to show that clever artificers once lived in the valley of Cargutah. With a good deal of trouble and labour we cleared out the well to the depth of about twenty-five or thirty feet, when we could dig no further owing to the increased influx of water, but we found this depth quite enough to keep the well pretty full at all times. Thus our supply of water was made secure.

I have already said that the river of Cargutah appeared to have been confined to its present channel by embankments built up at certain places in former times. On a careful study of those embankments and the adjacent land, and after taking what measurements I could, I came to the conclusion that the mound upon which the town stood was formerly surrounded, or nearly so, by a marsh formed by the water of the river before it had been embanked. Probably that was the reason why the town was built there. I asked myself if the former state of things could not be restored, if necessary, by again letting in the river water? I saw no reason to doubt it. One or more breaches in the embankment would (as well as I could judge of the levels) suffice to flood the country in the neighbourhood of the town, and thereby add greatly to its security against an enemy designing to attack it. Thereupon I formed certain plans, which, being submitted to De Guzman and the Indian lords, were approved by them, and left to me to be carried out in the manner I proposed. Accordingly I selected a suitable place by the river, and there I had the embankment cut down from above and thinned away from behind to such an extent that what remained of it at that particular spot was only kept in its place by certain timber supports and props, which, though solid enough for the time being, could quickly be wrenched and knocked away, so as to let the river burst through the weakened place and form a breach, which the rush of water would soon deepen and widen. This was, of course, to be a last resource, only to be adopted when the

necessity for it arose. It was a serious matter to let loose a flood the extent of which could not be foreseen, and which it might be difficult or impossible afterwards to abate.

As to our military strength, we could muster in all two thousand fighting men. The whole number would not be too much for the proper defence of the town if strongly attacked on all sides. But the whole two thousand men could certainly not be so employed, for some would have to remain as a guard for the women and children in the upper part of the valley, and others would have duties at various points without the town. We estimated that we could garrison the town with fifteen hundred men, and that this would be sufficient for all purposes likely to arise in the course of the threatened war. We had about that number of men who could be classed as good soldiers, well armed with superior weapons, in the use of which they had been thoroughly exercised — crossbows, spears, battle-axes, hatchets, swords and knives. The rest, about five hundred in number, were men who, from one cause or another, had not been fully disciplined as yet, and for the most part had only native arms, though none of them were without some metal weapon of our manufacture, for which all the Indians had an eager longing. The "Guards," so called by De Guzman, formed the choicest part of the army, and included all Indians of the class of lords or chiefs. They numbered 250, and were esteemed the bravest, as they were, for a certainty, the best armed, armoured, and disciplined of the whole army. Their special weapons were the crossbow, the battle-axe, and the long sword. It was from this body that De Guzman drew all his subordinate officers and lieutenants of whatever rank. Any man of the army who showed a good capacity in military matters was sent into the ranks of the Guards, and from thence promoted in time to some position of command in the army. This was a strict rule of De Guzman, and it was one highly conducive to subordination, discipline, and efficiency.

Such was our general condition, and such our preparations, at the time we were threatened with the vengeance of Tuscaluza and the invasion of our valley by a confederation of Indian tribes. We had learnt that numerous bodies of Indians had assembled from all parts at the appointed place by the Rio Grande; that there they had been

marshalled and organized so as to form one great army; that thence they had set out on their march in our direction, and with the avowed purpose of destroying us. About all this there was no uncertainty, secrecy, or duplicity. Our spies were numerous and their reports were, in the main, uniform. Besides, Tuscaluza and the other chiefs took no pains to prevent a knowledge of their doings and intentions going abroad, and anybody might go to or from their encampments without challenge. Confident in their overwhelming strength, they were probably indifferent to their movements becoming known to their designed victims. Up to the last moment we had continued to hope that perhaps something might happen to interfere with the enemy's designs against us and divert his warlike preparations in another direction. Now all such hopes were abandoned, and we had to face the grim fact of a great invasion by numerous and ruthless foes.

Accordingly our people were gathered in from all places down the valley. The non-efficients were sent away with a sufficient guard to the fastnesses of the upper part. In the town our garrison of fifteen hundred men were organized for duty, and assigned to different posts. A certain number of non-efficients were detained in the town to serve the garrison and leave the soldiers more free to attend to their military duties. Winona and Aymay remained in the town, being unwilling to separate themselves from their husbands at such a critical time. A similar grace was accorded to the wives of the two Spaniards, and those of some of the leading Indians. De Guzman took to the open country at the head of a force of five hundred men, having with him two of the horses, for the purpose of reconnoitring the enemy and watching his movements. I had command of the town in his absence. The drawbridges were raised, sentinels and guards posted, and a strict state of siege established throughout the town. In all this the old cacique had no voice and took no part, for of late his state of health had become so much worse that he had to keep to his bed, and was incapable of being consulted or of giving orders, or even being made to understand clearly what was going on.

CHAPTER XXXII.

De Guzman reconnoitres the enemy—Occupies a pass—Fights with the Indians—A feint and its failure—Outflanking and retreat of De Guzman—He wastes the country—Opposes the passage of a river—Imprudence of the Indians—Again defeated with heavy loss—Defiant attitude of De Guzman—A flotilla of canoes—De Guzman returns to the valley—Satisfactory results of the expedition.

IT was nigh upon a month before the return of De Guzman. In the valley every day of that time had been fully employed in warlike preparations in the town and at the workshops. We heard often from De Guzman, and had from time to time sent him food and other supplies. We learnt of what he was doing through his messengers, and afterwards more fully from himself. He had gone a good way towards the Rio Grande before he came within sight of the advancing enemy, whose force he estimated at between five and six thousand men, including a number who acted as porters or carriers, but who appeared, for the most part, to be capable fighting men. All were well armed and prepared for war in the native fashion. They marched in three pretty equal divisions, and showed more signs of order and discipline than De Guzman had yet observed amongst the Indians. Having no intention of attacking so formidable a host, he confined himself to the plan of taking every good opportunity of checking its advance and testing its metal and generalship. Once he held a narrow defile in a range of hills for three days, inflicting heavy losses upon the Indians. Those hills were a good way from the Rio Grande, and ran obliquely with its course. They were precipitous, but not very high. The defile was the only one in that neighbourhood through which a large body of men could conveniently pass, and De Guzman, being satisfied that the enemy must come through it, resolved to lie in wait there. He selected a position at the head of the pass, where the road was narrow and bounded on each side by steep cliffs. Here

he threw up a strong rampart of rocks, earth, and timber, and established himself behind it to await the enemy's advance. Some distance from his front the pass took a sharp turn, so that the obstruction would not be visible to an advancing foe until close upon it. On heights to the right and left he established sentinels on an extended line, so that he might have timely notice of any attempt to outflank him or take him in the rear.

The enemy had been advancing slowly and in good order over the more open country in three columns, but when at length the pass was reached, the Indians had to advance through it in one narrow column. Not having sent scouts forward, they came suddenly upon the rampart, and the head of the column was at once saluted with a shower of bolts and arrows which brought several of them to the ground before they had time to realise the situation. The front ranks fell back in disorder on those behind, who, not understanding what was going on in front, continued to press forward. In this state of confusion and panic, De Guzman, at the head of a hundred picked men, drawn up and ready for the occasion, leaped from the rampart and charged furiously upon the crowd of Indians with spears, swords, and battle-axes, slaughtering them almost without resistance. This mere butchery went on until the movement of retreat was imparted to the whole column, and the Indians commenced flying for their lives down the pass. With a self-restraint unusual in him, De Guzman refrained from pursuing the fugitives much beyond the turning in the pass, and, contenting himself with his brilliant little victory, fell leisurely back to the rampart.

This affair happened early in the forenoon, and for several hours the pass was deserted by the enemy. At last a sentinel gave notice that the Indians were once more coming up the pass in a closely formed column. This time there could be no surprise for them, for now they knew that an enemy blocked the way, though they could have no very accurate knowledge of the number of the force opposed to them, and the nature of the obstruction against which they were advancing. Then, or at any time after the encounter of the morning, De Guzman could have made a safe retreat, but, confident in the strength of his position and in his men, he determined to keep his place as long as

possible. After a short delay, under cover of the corner, the Indians swept round the turning with many loud cries, and advanced resolutely to the assault. Again shafts and bolts rained upon them from the rampart, killing or wounding numbers of them. They replied with flights of arrows, all the time advancing rapidly to the wall. Up this as many of them as could get to the front endeavoured to find a passage. But they found little hold for foot or hand, and all the time they were exposed to the missiles of the defenders. Under proper leaders, such a number of brave men might have scaled the rough wall and dislodged its defenders; but they had no skilful leaders and no scaling materials, and such of them as succeeded in getting near the top had no time to use their weapons before they were hurled down again, wounded or slain. De Guzman described to us how rush after rush had been made against the parapet before the enemy discovered that it could not be gained in that way. The attacking Indians were simply slaughtered one after another as they scrambled up the wall, practically unarmed and unable to defend themselves. Those further away were shot down in numbers by ambushed crossbow-men, who sent their bolts into the swaying mass without themselves being exposed to much danger. This unequal fight went on for nearly an hour before someone in authority ordered a retreat. The Indians, nothing loth, at once ceased the attack and commenced flying to the rear in great disorder. Then De Guzman, once more sallying forth at the head of a compact body of his men, charged upon the panic-stricken crowd and slew them without mercy.

During most of the following day there were but few signs of the enemy in the pass, but De Guzman kept on the alert, rightly judging that he was not going to be left in undisturbed possession of the position he had taken up, but which he did not mean to abandon just yet. The hostile caciques would never allow their great expedition to be frustrated by a mere handful of men; and the pass being the only convenient road for the army to take, every sacrifice and effort which might be necessary would be made to clear it. The only question in De Guzman's mind was as to the form in which the next attempt to do this would be made. He had nothing to fear from overhanging

cliffs (as in my case at the cavern), for there were none near enough and accessible enough from which he could be assailed. What seemed to him most probable was that parties of Indians would make their way across the range of hills at other points, and, collecting in his rear, expose him to simultaneous attacks before and behind, which he could not successfully resist. As he had no intention of allowing himself to be put into such a predicament, he issued fresh instructions for the best look-out to be kept at the various points of observation on the hill tops, and for immediate news to be sent to him of any such movement on the part of the enemy.

Towards the close of the day it appeared as if the hostile caciques had resolved upon some course of action. Alarm was given that the Indians were once more swarming up the valley, apparently intent on renewing the fight in the same hopeless fashion as before. This surprised De Guzman, for he supposed the enemy had by that time found out that the position was not to be forced in that way. However, he made everything ready to resist this fresh assault. The Indians came rushing on as before with loud cries, but the attack on the rampart was feeble and badly maintained and was soon over. The Indians then commenced running away at the top of their speed, but there was so little that looked like reality in the whole proceedings that De Guzman held back from pursuing them in the manner he had done before. It was well he did so, for shortly afterwards he learnt from his outposts that the Indians beyond the bend in the pass were drawn up in full force and good order, ready to receive the expected charge. By this it was seen that the intention was to draw out the sallying force, as on the two former occasions, and then fall upon it in overwhelming numbers. This force, beaten back and closely pressed by the enemy, could only have regained the shelter of the rampart mingled with a crowd of hostile Indians. This would embarrass the defenders and cause so much confusion and uncertainty that the position would in all probability have been easily carried. The plan was a good one, but the suspicions of De Guzman defeated it.

That night he caused a great fire to be kept alight in front of the rampart, so that any movement on the part of the enemy might be the better seen. Nothing was,

however, attempted, though the Indians still remained in the pass in full force. Things continued the same during the whole of the next day, De Guzman being still tenacious of remaining in a place he had so stoutly defended until he should be obliged to quit it of necessity. But towards evening word came from some of the more distant posts that bands of Indians were making their way over the hills on the left. They were so far but few in number, but De Guzman knew that in time enough would gather to threaten his rear and cut off his retreat. It was time to be moving, and he resolved to give the enemy the slip. At sunset, therefore, the better to deceive the hostile Indians, he had the watchfire relighted, and shortly after got his men together and marched quickly away from the rampart. Probably several hours elapsed before the enemy found that the pass was free, for the retreat of De Guzman was in no wise molested, and it was long before he again came in sight of the foe.

Having passed through the hilly country, always keeping well in advance of the enemy, he emerged into the more level and fertile lands. Having considered the course which those behind him would most probably take, he gave orders for the destruction of everything which might afford them shelter or sustenance. In this way he confessed to having wasted a wide belt of country, burning or otherwise destroying all houses and stores of food of whatever kind, but without (he declared) otherwise afflicting the natives or personally molesting them. He and his men were willing enough again to come to blows with the enemy, but a favourable opportunity of doing so did not present itself until they came to a good-sized river (found to be the lower part of the river of Cargutah) flowing in a southerly direction, which the advancing army would have to cross. Passing over this river by means of rafts, De Guzman encamped amongst the trees on the other side, and sent out scouts to discover the approach of the enemy. After waiting for some days, word was brought that the hostile forces had reached the river and taken up a position some distance below the encampment on the other side. Early next morning De Guzman, with most of his force, marched through the forest and reached a point from whence he was able secretly to observe the Indians on the opposite

side of the river. They had arranged themselves in three camps, and set up huts, skin tents, and wigwams, as if intending to repose themselves for a time. Parties of them were fishing in the river, and others were visible amongst the hills some distance off, apparently foraging and hunting for food, of which they were probably in want. They showed no signs of an intention to make the passage of the river at once. To do this they would have to build large and numerous rafts, for the river was here too broad and strong in current to be otherwise crossed by so numerous a body, and De Guzman was assured by some of his people that there was no ford up or down stream for a great distance.

It was not until the third day of their arrival that they began to show signs of raft-building. Then they became constantly busy with the work during six days in succession —some bringing down timber to the river-side, others putting the rafts together, and others superintending the work, amongst whom Tuscaluza himself was distinguishable by his tall figure. Not once during the whole of those nine or ten days did they take steps for examining the other side of the river. This seems surprising, inasmuch as they had reason to know that an active and dangerous enemy was in the field against them, watching their movements, and ready to take advantage of any opportunity for embarrassing them. But it is the fault of the Indians that they despise such precautions, seeming to think that they are signs of timidity and cowardice. It was on this account that they suffered so severely in the hills, and had their march delayed for three days, and now again they were doomed to further loss and delay from the same cause.

When several rafts had been completed, a number of men embarked upon them and commenced pushing and paddling them over to the opposite shore. Seeing this, De Guzman retired further into the forest, intending that the first-comers should land peaceably and without suspicion. As more and more crossed over, he thought it prudent to fall back as far as his encampment, the better to escape discovery. Meanwhile he took notice of the manner in which the rafts were navigated, the time they took to cross the river, and the number of men they carried. By this he saw that it was impossible for the enemy to transport any large body of men quickly from one side to the other. He laid his

plans accordingly. When five or six hundred Indians had passed over, he set out from his encampment and came round through the forest within charging distance of the Indians who had come across. They were not in the least prepared for an attack. All their attention was directed to the passage to and fro of the rafts, and many of them had laid down their weapons at one spot the better to assist in the work of landing the laden rafts and sending back those which were empty. De Guzman, noticing all this, instructed his men what to do, and gave the word to charge. The Cherokees dashed out of the forest in an extended line and swept down upon the astonished enemy with fierce cries and war-whoops. The mass of five or six hundred Indians, hemmed in between the river and the advancing Cherokees, ran about in the greatest confusion, not knowing what to do or which way to turn. Those who had parted with their arms made a rush to recover them, but found they were already in possession of the enemy. Some shouted for help across the river, others tried to get away on the rafts, and others took to the water to reach the other side by swimming. Those amongst them who were armed faced about and met the charge of the Cherokees as best they could. They fought well and bravely for a time, but were outnumbered and overmatched by their better armed and better ordered opponents. On getting clear of the forest the Cherokees had taken a crescent-shaped formation which enabled them to overlap the crowd of Indians at both ends. Raining blows upon them with their superior weapons, they steadily pressed them back towards the river, killing and wounding all who attempted to make a stand. While this was going on in front, frantic efforts were being made on the other side of the river to send over reinforcements to those who were standing to the fight. Some rafts reached the shore in time, and gave fresh vigour to the defence, but such reinforcements were totally inadequate to bringing about anything like even a numerical equality between the combatants on each side. So the Cherokees continued to gain ground and to force their adversaries further and further back, until they fairly drove them into the water. Then De Guzman brought round from the rear a party of bowmen, who sent a hail of bolts and shafts into the mass of Indians struggling in the river, driving them further and further out until they were carried

away by the current. Some swam for the other side, others managed to scramble on board rafts, and many seemed to let themselves go with the stream, being either disinclined to go back to the other side, or unable from wounds or fatigue to make the effort. So long as any were within bow-range, either on the rafts or in the water, they were made marks for the arrows and bolts of the Cherokee bowmen. Some of these were sent along the shore down stream, in order to prevent any rallying on the part of the fugitives. A few did manage to land, but, so far from attempting to make a stand, were only too eager to make off through the woods as fast as possible.

Four of the enemy's rafts fell into the hands of the Cherokees, and these De Guzman had broken up to supply, in part, the materials for a kind of fort or breastwork, which he immediately set about building on the bank of the river. This was a plain intimation to the enemy that no uncontested landing could take place in that quarter. It was, indeed, clear enough that with mere rafts no landing could be effected in face of such opposition, and the hostile Indians, seeing this, abandoned certain preparations they were making to cross in force in order to avenge a disastrous defeat. They recognized, in effect, that the Cherokees were masters for the time being of the opposite shore, and could not be dislodged by any means which did not ensure the simultaneous landing of a superior force. No such means were afforded by unnavigable rafts, precariously impelled through a strong current across a broad river.

So far all was well, but De Guzman was quite aware that he had not permanently prevented the enemy from crossing the river at some point or another. He could not guard the whole of the waterway up and down stream, but he had the satisfaction of feeling that he had delayed the advance of the hostile Indians, and was putting them under the compulsion of finding other means, and another place, for crossing beyond the range of his observation. The better to carry out the latter object, he established patrols and guards to watch the river for a long way below and above the fort. In the meantime he kept his men in readiness to march upon any given point where the enemy appeared to meditate crossing.

This state of things continued for many days, the Indians

on the opposite shore (fully observing what De Guzman was doing) being apparently unable to devise a means for getting over the difficulties he had created for them. But it turned out that they were neither so inactive nor so resourceless as had been surmised, for, some ten days after the fight, word was brought in from the furthest post down the river that a great flotilla of canoes, many of the largest size, was coming rapidly up stream. With this aid, Tuscaluza could quickly send across the river a force which it would be folly for De Guzman to think of fighting in his present circumstances. The game was played out so far as it could be advantageously played by him, and the time had now come for abandoning it. Without waiting for the arrival of the flotilla, or for any fuller information about it, he got his men together, set fire to the fort, and, in full view of the yelling and disappointed enemy, fell back through the woods in the direction of Cargutah.

Finding there was no likelihood of having another skirmish with the enemy on his own terms, he continued on his course to the valley, very well satisfied, on the whole, with his month's campaign. It was true that it had cost him forty men killed or badly wounded, but he estimated that, in one way or another, he had inflicted on the other side a loss of not less than five or six times his own, and, in addition, he had delayed the advance of the invaders, strained their resources, and probably dispirited most of them for the task set before them. He had also the no small advantage of ascertaining for himself that their leaders were but poor commanders, ignorant of tactics and generalship, and without ingenuity, and that the common men, though brave and willing, were almost wholly undisciplined. He gave it as his opinion, after this month of experience, that the approaching army of Indians would never be able to take the town of Cargutah, nor even beleaguer it for any length of time. For the former, they had no appliances and no engineering skill; for the latter, they had not sufficient food with them for a long stay, nor was it likely they could procure enough in the wasted valley of Cargutah. Moreover, he assured the assembled Cherokee lords that, with patience and quiet waiting for opportunities, together with good generalship and fair luck, it would be quite possible to force a disastrous retreat upon the great host of invaders.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

We destroy our workshops and other buildings—Flood the valley—The enemy's army and fleet—Invested by land and water—Peace negotiations—Indignantly rejected—The attack begins—I defend the water-gate—Advance of canoes—Ingenuity of the enemy—Disadvantages of our position—Battering the gate—At last we repel the enemy.

THE invaders being now close at hand, it was time to take the last steps necessary to our defence. De Guzman insisted upon the immediate destruction of everything in the valley which might be of any use to the enemy. I could not but agree in this view, though it went to my heart to think that our pleasant and happy home, and the many fruits of our labour, care, and ingenuity, were all doomed to destruction. Having removed from my village (our little Sheffield, as I loved to consider it) everything of value which could be carried away, fire was applied to the buildings, and the whole with their contents burnt to the ground. Many other detached houses and groups of houses were similarly destroyed, our rafts and boats broken up, and the valley reduced to a scene of desolation. Of all our works, nothing was left but the furnaces (now three in number), the charcoal pits, and the lime-kilns. Then the weakened part in the embankment of the river was broken through, and the water let out over the lower levels. In the course of a day and night it spread over the parts of the valley nearest the river, and made a sort of shallow lake, averaging two or three feet deep. The flood stretched from the river to the wall and gate of the town, but on the far side, where the ground commenced to rise towards the hills, the fosse only was filled, and the water spread a little beyond it in a narrow belt of a few inches deep.

We now awaited the appearance of the enemy. This

was not long delayed. On the third day after the return of De Guzman, the Indian army, with much noise and shouting, beating of drums and blowing of horns, marched into the valley at its lower end, between the river and the hills. There it encamped on the edge of the forest, the striped skin flag of Tuscaluza flying from a pole planted in the centre of his position. For two days Tuscaluza himself, accompanied by several of the Indian lords, appeared to be busy examining the country around. On the second day the flotilla of boats of which De Guzman had had notice made its appearance coming up the river, and drew up close to the encampment. It was a formidable fleet, many of the vessels being large enough to hold thirty men, though a number were small canoes of bark, only capable of carrying from three to six men. Our people thought that most of the larger vessels must have come from the Rio Grande, as none of such size were ever seen so far up the Cargutah river. On the morning of the third day the enemy got into motion. The fleet came up the river in a long column and stopped in front of the town. The larger vessels stayed in the river, but most of the smaller ones passed through the opening we had made in the bank, and spread themselves over the shallow water. The land forces moved along the higher ground to avoid the flood, and took up positions on the slopes and hills overlooking the town on that side. Some force was left behind in the encampment (as we afterwards learnt) to forage in the woods and get meat for the army.

It was now plain to us that we had more foes to cope with than we had been led to suppose. The enemy must have been largely reinforced since De Guzman's last skirmish, for it was certain that the force now encompassing us could not represent less than six thousand warriors. No doubt when Tuscaluza found it necessary to send back for boats to enable him to cross the Cargutah river, he thought it advisable to procure reinforcements of men to make up his losses and increase his numbers.

Here, then, were we fairly invested by land and by water, surrounded by savage foes who would show us no mercy if we should fall into their hands. We had to bide the course of events and wait for the enemy to develop his plans of attack. Though not without anxiety as regards

what these might prove to be, we were full of courage and confidence. We held a strong and well-garrisoned town, had plenty of food and water, and every means for keeping our men fresh and in good fighting trim. Against us was arrayed a host of savages—brave enough, no doubt, but little disciplined, poorly armed in comparison with us, encamped with little or no shelter in the open country, and certain within a short time to be pinched for supplies. It was not, therefore, without reason that we considered the better chances and the balance of advantage to be on our side. This was the general feeling, and nothing could be better than the spirit and resolution of our people, from the leaders down to the common soldiers. We felt sure that no time would be lost in attacking us, and we were glad of it. Tuscaluza and the confederate chiefs must be aware that their forces were not fitted to carry on a protracted investment, and that whatever was to be done against us must be attempted quickly, or not at all. Yet some delay did take place, the reason for which was not difficult to understand. The closer view of the town must have disturbed the enemy, and given him occasion to pause before risking an attack upon it. For several days the hostile chiefs could be seen examining the place on all sides—sometimes from the land side, sometimes from the banks of the river, sometimes from canoes brought as near as might be safe to the walls. They had never before seen a town so defended and knew not what to make of it.

After four days of this delay, whilst we were still curiously awaiting what was to come of so much inspection, a party of three Indians was seen coming towards the land-gate of the town, waving green branches, and making other signs of a desire to parley. When within speaking distance, they called out that they had come from Tuscaluza with a message to the cacique and chiefs of the Cherokee tribe. As the old cacique was not in a state to be seen, five or six of the Cherokee lords, with De Guzman, went out through the gate to talk with Tuscaluza's messengers. Briefly, their errand was to make an offer of the withdrawal of the army if the cacique would surrender the Spaniards in the town, and promise to abandon his Spanish proclivities and revert to the customs and usages of the Indians. The Cherokees

thought those proposals outrageous and insulting, and De Guzman got into a great rage with the bearers of them. I had previously been sent for from the other side of the town, and hurrying up to learn what the embassy was about, was just in time to prevent violence being offered to the messengers. I represented that the men ought not to be held responsible for their masters, that it would be disgraceful to us to harm defenceless messengers, and that they should be sent back with a suitable answer, not from either De Guzman or myself, who were personally interested parties, but from the Cherokee lords alone. My remonstrances and advice prevailed in the end, and the messengers were sent back with a spirited and dignified refusal on the part of the Cherokees to violate the laws of hospitality, or accept any dictation from Tuscaluza. To this was added a threat that the bearers of any insulting messages of a similar character would certainly be hanged from the walls in full view of their employers.

We took this embassy as showing a certain reluctance on the part of the enemy to commence hostilities. The appearance of our defences, and the experience they had already had of our fighting qualities, made (we supposed) the confederate chiefs unwilling to engage in a contest of a precarious and costly character, and anxious, in spite of their vast preparations, to escape from the embroilment, if they could do so with any show of success. Before they had seen the town they would not have thought of making the proposals they did, and would not have been satisfied with anything less than the effacement of the Cherokees, as well as the sacrifice of their Spanish friends. But they had failed in their negotiations and must now go on with the war at any risk or cost, and commence as quickly as possible. So we judged, and our surmise proved to be correct.

On the second day after the return of the messengers, the enemy commenced moving on all sides. From an early hour bodies of men took up positions on the slopes behind the town. On the river side the boats and canoes were all in motion. As many of them as could float in the shallow flood water gathered in lines and groups as near the town as was consistent with safety. Here they were laden with quantities of things which we could not at first make out,

but some of which were bundles of arrows and weapons. Numbers of Indians waded through the water to and from those smaller vessels, which seemed to be designed at present for carrying things rather than persons. The forces of the enemy on either side were concentrated opposite our two gates, as offering the best, as indeed the only available points for attack, for elsewhere the town wall rose clear and solid out of the flood. Seeing what was intended by the enemy, De Guzman, as commander-in-chief, made the best disposition possible of his forces. He assigned a strong division of mixed arms to each gate, and another he mustered in the open place in the centre of the town to serve as a reserve. The remainder of the force he distributed around the town wall, under the command of a number of the Cherokee lords. To me he entrusted the defence of the water-gate, or gate facing the river, he himself intending to give particular attention to the other gate, while superintending the defence of the town as a whole. One of the Spaniards he left with the reserve force as his lieutenant; the other, with the negro, was assigned to duties on the wall.

Those arrangements of ours were very expeditiously carried out, but were hardly completed when the enemy gave the signal for attack by the blowing of a horn and the beating of a drum, from the top of one of the hills behind the town, the sound re-echoing throughout the valley. It was answered from all sides by the war cries of the Indians advancing against both gates. I did not, of course, see what was done at the land-gate, though I had the account afterwards, and so I will first tell what befell us at the water-gate, where, as it turned out, the chief fighting of that day took place, and this by the enemy's design, which was unsuspected by us at the beginning.

We saw from the wall the fleet of small vessels pushed forward through the shallows by a multitude of wading Indians, the whole advancing in a broad and solid column of men and boats mixed together. It was evident at a glance what important purposes could be served by this ingenious aquatic combination of men and canoes. As soon as they came within reach of our arms, we let fly at them as hard as we could, but with no very great effect, for many of them were protected by the boats, which we now

began to see contained not only stores of arrows and other weapons, but also logs of wood, stones, and the quilted cotton mantles and skin coats and leggings worn by the Indians, together with other things likely to serve as a shield against our arrows. Some of these articles were spread out above the canoes, others loosely piled up in them, and the canoes being turned broadside towards us, the hostile Indians were in this way pretty well sheltered from our shafts. I saw, in fact, and somewhat to my dismay, that we were powerless to check the advancing column, which continued to come nearer and nearer to us, all the time directing flights of arrows against us as we stood on the wall. Several of our men were struck, and soon we found it dangerous to expose any part of our bodies above the parapet. When the column came within some thirty yards of the wall it stopped and formed itself more regularly, with the boats to the front, and the men crouching behind them; from this cover they commenced shooting at us more vigorously than ever, and with such good aim that we were unable to reply with any effect. The number and true direction of their arrows was indeed such that in a little time we found it almost impossible to get a shot at them without the certainty of being hit, in the act of aiming, by one or more of their shafts. In this way we lost so many men that I was fain to give directions to the others not to further expose themselves.

I was far from content with this state of things. It was not at all what I had expected. I began to think that the plan of flooding the country might turn out an unfortunate one for us. True, it was decided upon at a moment when we had no reason to think that the enemy would come provided with boats, and when, in fact, the enemy could have had no intention of the kind. It was an unfortunate accident or coincidence for us that the boats should have been brought up the Cargutah river just at the time when we were flooding the country. Tuscaluza and the confederate chiefs were not slow in turning to their own advantage an expedient of ours which we supposed would enormously inconvenience them. For this there was now no remedy, but I anxiously speculated upon what might be the further plans of our foes, as it could not well be their full purpose merely to stand in the water and compel us to

keep under shelter of our parapet. Their mode of attack was too well prepared and systematic to have only this purposeless ending. It turned out to be so.

After this long-arm fighting had gone on for some time, with all the advantage on the side of our enemies, they commenced to develop a further movement which quite changed the nature of the contest. A strong body of Indians came away from the boats, and advanced as quickly as they could through the water towards the gate. We did what we could to stay them, but they were well covered by the shooting of their comrades from the boats, and the only effect of our exposing ourselves was that several more of us were shot down. In a very few minutes the fosse was reached, but this offered but a momentary check for the Indians. A row of sharp-pointed stakes, inclining outwards, ran all round the inner edge of the ditch, but there was a gap in the row in front of each gateway, owing to the necessity of using, in ordinary times, a plank bridge over the fosse at those parts. These bridges had been removed on the approach of the enemy, the gaps remaining unstaked. Thus the Indians attacking our gate were able to cross the fosse without encountering any obstruction. They tumbled headlong into the deeper water of the fosse in crowds, and a stroke or two carried them to the other side, where they again touched ground on the short causeway leading up to the gate, against which they at once commenced thundering. The gate was sunk in the thickness of the wall, which was here buttressed and strengthened on each side with solid brickwork. The wall was carried over the gate on stout beams of timber, roughly squared, laid horizontally across the gateway. Thus the gate stood in a kind of recess, which, though not very deep, afforded protection to a number of Indians against missiles discharged from the top of the wall. Such was the state of things at the moment the Indians were crowding in front of the gate and battering it with stone hammers, billets of wood, pieces of stone, and their flat war clubs, which are almost equal to iron for weight, strength, and hardness. The gate was made of thick planks of hard wood strengthened by crosspieces at the back, the whole secured by large nails. It was made fast in its place by crossbars of wood, and heavy bolts

of brass and copper. The solid brickwork the Indians could not hurt, but upon the gate they might make some impression, strong as it was.

Having run down to make sure that the gate was properly guarded by our men, I hastened back to the wall to see what could be done to dislodge the enemy who were battering at the gate from without. Many of them were unsheltered by the gateway, and so more or less exposed to discharges of missiles from the top of the wall, but we could do little against them, because of the watchfulness of the Indians at the boats. We could not expose ourselves from the parapet without almost certainly being struck by one or more arrows. But after some consideration of our awkward position, we adopted a plan which gave us a certain degree of protection against the enemy's shafts. By means of lances and poles, we held out in front of the parapet cotton quilts and robes of buffalo hide, to shield us against the arrows coming from the boats. Under screen of these we were now able to lean over the wall with comparative security, and assail the Indians beneath with a hail of stones, bricks, logs of timber, arrows and bolts, and anything we could lay our hands on suitable for the purpose. Against this sudden and furious attack they were absolutely defenceless and quite at our mercy, for they could not retaliate, as they had left their bows and arrows with the boats before charging through the water. So whilst those nearest in kept pounding away at the gate, those who could not find room in the recess were being rapidly destroyed by us. The tables were now turned upon our enemies. The more exposed of them, seeing that by staying where they were they would be inevitably slaughtered, plunged into the fosse and hastened back to the protection of their boats. The others remained where they were in the recess, but ceased their attacks upon the gate. How to deal with them was a question, but one which I was in no hurry to solve. It might be dangerous, with the main body so close at hand, to unfasten the gate and drive them off, and as they were doing no harm where they were, I decided to leave them alone until I could devise some safe plan for dislodging them. However, they saved me from my perplexity in a little while, for (seeing, I suppose,

that they were doing no good by remaining where they were) they made a rush in a body from their place of concealment, plunged into the fosse, got to the other side, and made their way as fast as they could through the shallow water to the boats. We took toll of them as they fled, bringing down one of their number, and wounding three or four more. After that the boats drew further off, leaving us victorious. The attack had failed, though it had been stoutly maintained for nigh upon three hours.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

The contest at the land-gate—A battle of bows—Breastworks of the enemy—Precautions against surprise—We make arrow screens—A night of anxiety—Early morning surprise—General assault—The water-gate again attacked—Employment of a battering ram—Bridging the fosse—The gate gives way—A hot and fluctuating fight in the gateway—We are at length driven back—The Indians enter the town—Reinforcements at last—Horsemen lead the way—Turning the tables—The Indians driven out and pursued—Capture and destruction of their canoes—Replacing the gate—I hasten to De Guzman's assistance.

IT was not until the fighting at the water-gate was all over that De Guzman came hurrying up at the head of several companies. The attack on the other gate having slackened, he crossed the town as quickly as possible to learn how I fared, and was pleased to find that I had repulsed the enemy without needing help. The battle at the land-gate, he said, had been merely one of bows, the enemy not having made any serious attempt to reach the gate itself. On considering the nature of the two attacks, we agreed that the real one was on my side, and that the other was little better than a feint, intended to distract our attention and divide our forces. Nevertheless, the latter had some features unusual in Indian warfare, so far as we knew. The Indians had thrown up a sort of breastwork of branches on the slope of the hill facing the gate, and from behind this, as from other situations, they had sent their arrows. This breastwork was like an abatis, and we supposed that the Creeques, our enemies at the cavern, had given their allies an idea of this sort of work. From this protection they had kept up a continuous discharge of arrows against the town during all the time the attack on the other side was going on. They had driven our men under cover of the parapet, and had made one or two movements as if intending to advance against the gate, but

had not done so. They still remained in force behind the breastwork and amongst the hills, and showed no signs of abandoning the siege of the town. It was evident we were not yet to be quit of them, though we could not make out what they were going to do next. Neither De Guzman nor myself considered it at all safe or satisfactory that we should thus be overmastered on both sides of the town by the bowmen of the enemy, and compelled to keep under cover of our parapets, but for this we saw no present cure.

Under the circumstances none of our precautions were relaxed, but everything was so ordered as to enable us to stand on our full defence at any moment. Our men were sent away in sections to rest and refresh themselves, those not so engaged remaining on duty at the gates and on the wall. All were to be ready to assemble at their assigned posts on the first alarm. Nothing, in short, was left undone by us to guard against a surprise or sudden attack, or any attempt to take us at a disadvantage. Matters were arranged so that our whole force should be under arms a couple of hours before daylight, that being the most likely time for an attempted surprise on the part of the enemy.

All things being settled in this way, I employed the remainder of the day in trying to make some provision against the annoyance of the enemy's shafts. I got around me a number of our handiest workmen, and set about making several screens or large shields to cover us when fighting from the wall. These we made of thick hides and the quilted stuff already mentioned, stretched upon and secured to light frames of wood. The screens so composed were fastened to slim poles in such a way as to allow of their being readily run out beyond the wall, when required. Hanging in this way in front of the parapet, like curtains, they would to some extent protect our men against shafts from the more distant foes whilst engaged in discharging missiles on those close under the wall. We worked hard at those screens, and before sunset we completed several, some of which I sent across the town for use at the other gate.

Night came on, and for several hours all remained still within and without the town. At the appointed time

before dawn all our men quietly took their stations as on the day before. I posted myself above the gate, and remained there on the watch. The night at this time was moonless and very dark. Nothing could be made out but a dim mist overlying the flooded country. For a long time no suspicious sound reached my ears, but at length there came a noise as if of a movement in the water below us, some distance off. It came from about the position where the enemy's boats lay, and I made no doubt but that they were once more being prepared for action. Presently I heard a splashing in the water close by, and again I felt sure that a party from the boats was advancing through the water to the gate, and that the attack was to be renewed in that quarter. For this we were all as ready as we could be, but nothing could be done before the commencement of the attack, nor until daylight enabled us to make out our foes. We had not long to wait now. A faint tinge of orange-grey light appeared in the eastern sky: every moment it grew redder and stronger, and in less than ten minutes it was plain dawn. At once there arose through the heavy morning air an outburst of warlike cries, coming from the water. These were re-echoed by similar cries from the other side of the town, intermingled with the hoarse blasts of the native trumpet and the boom of the drum. The attack had recommenced at each gate. We could hear the Indians battering at ours with extraordinary violence, though at first we could scarcely see them. As the light increased and the mist cleared away we made them out, and began to understand what they were about. We saw a band of them busy around a large piece of fir tree, using it against the gate like a battering ram. Some had hold of it by the stumps of its branches; others assisted in its use by means of straps and thongs of hide passed round it. We now knew how it was that the sound of the blows against the gate was so much louder than on the occasion of the former attack. Further out the line of boats became visible, rather nearer to us than on the day before. Behind them loomed dark masses of Indians, who had already commenced to send their arrows towards us. Closer in a new and more alarming appearance was presented. Under cover of the mist and darkness, the Indians had managed to block up the fosse just in front of the gate with some long canoes

made of hollowed-out tree trunks. Upon these they had laid branches of trees and quantities of coarse grass, the whole forming a kind of floating bridge over the fosse. This (for them) clever piece of engineering work had been so silently done that we had no suspicion of its existence until daylight disclosed it to us. Over this they had passed with the piece of fir tree, which they were now swinging vigorously against the gate with a succession of tremendous strokes, while their comrades at the boats were keeping up a brisk discharge of arrows against us.

It required but a few minutes to realise all this, and the sun had not yet risen before the attack was in full swing. I had the screens out immediately, and directed our whole attention to the Indians attacking the gate. Upon them we brought our bows and crossbows to bear, and assailed them in every possible way from the top of the wall. We brought numbers of them down, but could not force them to discontinue using the ram. Sometimes we stopped them for a brief space, but numbers were always ready to rush forward and take the places of those who had fallen. Nor were we without losses on our side. The screens were not a perfect protection, though of great service. The arrows from the boats were sent with such force that many of them passed right through the screens and struck our men on the parapet, and this happened with more frequency as the line of boats gradually came nearer. Some got so near as to be close to the outer edge of the fosse, and the men fighting from behind them shot their arrows upwards at us behind the screens, giving us much annoyance. Others stationed themselves on the causeway and the floating bridge and similarly assailed us. Still we had to stand to it at any cost and do our best to stop the attack upon the gate, for unless we could do so in some way, and that speedily, it must yield to the mighty blows struck against it. So the fight went on, the enemy suffering more than we; but though we struck down numbers of them, we could not force them to retire. Two or three times we succeeded so far as to compel them to drop the ram for a time, but then a fresh rush would take place and the battering work would recommence as vigorously as ever.

After more than half an hour of this kind of fighting, I was called below to look at the state of the gate. I was

not much wanted on the wall, and leaving instructions for the men there to keep on fighting in the same way, I hurried down to the gate. I found it in a bad state. In two or three places the heavy timber was broken and splintered, all the bars, bolts, and fastenings strained or displaced, and the lower part driven in some inches. My men had already done what they could to keep the gate in its place, and I now had further props and supports placed against it, though it was clear that all we could do in this way would not long keep out the enemy, if the battering were continued. Seeing the serious position of affairs I despatched a messenger to De Guzman for aid, and in the meantime I drew up what men I had with me in a column of four wide just in front of the gateway, ready to receive a rush of the enemy should the gate go down. I had not above one hundred and fifty men for this purpose, for our losses had been heavy during the last two days, and I could not afford to draw a man from the wall so long as there was a chance of saving the gate from above.

The catastrophe came quicker than I had expected. The gate was riven by so many holes and fractures that a score of hands were thrust through to get at the props and fastenings within. Upon these limbs we used our weapons as we could, and through the openings in the gate we shot our bolts or used our spears whenever we had the chance. But all would not do. The men without shot back at us, and kept injuring the gate more and more with their hatchets and clubs. Suddenly there was a pause in the battering, and then a wild yell, and a mighty pressure upon the gate which carried it bodily away from its position and sent it crashing to the ground, a heap of wreckage. Over this the Indians came leaping and yelling in a dense mass, which filled up all the gateway. We received them with our spears, and with a steady and quick discharge of bolts and arrows. The more forward of them fell in heaps, and for a moment the onward rush was checked. But with new cries those behind again dashed forward, and through the now open gateway we could see numbers of Indians running from the direction of the boats to the aid of their comrades in the gateway. Seeing that we were likely to be swept away by the mere impetus and weight of so great a body of men, I gave the word to charge before our foes had

time to get clear of the gateway. The shock was tremendous, but our closer and better disciplined men had the best of it, and the enemy was forced to recoil a little. Following this first success with a vigorous use of all the weapons at our command, we gradually pressed the mass of Indians backwards, bringing numbers of them to the ground, and inflicting ghastly wounds on many others. In this hand-to-hand conflict we had all the advantages of discipline and superior weapons on our side, and suffered from no disadvantage in point of numbers. For though our foes were vastly more numerous than we, this did not tell in their favour in the narrow gateway. But they stood their ground manfully, and though they had to fall back they did not do so willingly, but faced us all the time, and yielded only to sheer pressure. But when we had driven them out through the gateway and on to the short causeway, we found our position was not so good. Here the somewhat wider space enabled them to surround the head of our column and attack it on the flanks as well as in front. It was now our turn to give way; and little by little, and inflicting heavy losses upon us, they forced us back into the gateway, where once more the contest was continued on more equal terms. Three times did the battle fluctuate in this way, with no marked advantage to either side. We had not driven off the Indians, nor had they got secure possession of the gateway. But they were coming up as numerous and as fresh as ever, whilst we had already lost heavily, and were becoming exhausted with incessant fighting. After our third charge, the enemy so pressed upon us as to make our falling back like a disorderly retreat. They forced us through the gateway, followed us beyond it, and spreading out on each side, began to surround us within the town wall, giving us less chance than ever of making a fresh charge, or even of standing our ground for any length of time.

It was at this highly-critical moment that the anxiously expected reinforcements arrived, after a delay which was at the time unaccountable to me, and might well have been disastrous to us and to the town as well. As we were desperately struggling for our lives, we heard the clatter of horses' hoofs coming down the street behind us, and, looking back, I saw De Guzman and two Cherokee

cavaliers galloping towards us. Not far behind came a column of our warriors, advancing at the run, but keeping good order. Our enemies were in no sort of formation to resist such a charge, but they met it boldly. The horsemen dashed in amongst them, followed by the footmen. The charge carried the column right through the mob of Indians, dividing it in two. The horsemen then wheeled about and led a second onslaught upon the Indians, scattering them to right and left, and killing and wounding many of them. Meanwhile I rallied as many of my men as I could get together, and joined in the fray. The Indians were now attacked on nearly all sides with bows, spears, battle-axes, and every available weapon. They were becoming demoralised, by being forced constantly to shift from one position to another and to keep moving. Whenever they massed themselves together, the horsemen and the more swift-footed of the Cherokees charged upon them and forced them to divide. This manœuvre (the credit for which was due to De Guzman) was so often repeated that soon there was nowhere any considerable group of them left, and they were being hunted down and destroyed in detail all over the place. Those who could disentangle themselves from the fray made for the gateway, pursued by our men; others were slain where they stood, fighting bravely to the last. The slaughter was perhaps greatest at the gateway, after the real fighting was over, and the victory indisputably ours. Not more than four or five men could pass through at a time, and the passage was obstructed by the bodies of the killed and wounded, and the wreckage of the gate. The hindmost were slaughtered in numbers, and with little or no resistance. Those who got through were hotly pursued by our men. I was too spent and bruised to care to take part in the pursuit, but, mounting the wall, I watched its course from the parapet. The Cherokees, led by De Guzman, now on foot, chased the flying Indians over the boat-bridge they had themselves made, and through the flood-water, killing all whom they overtook. Some of them attempted to rally at the line of boats, but De Guzman, dividing his forces, swept round at each end of the line, drove out the Indians, and pursued them for some distance towards the river. Then he commanded a halt, not deeming it prudent to go further

from the town, and knowing that he could do nothing against the fleet of large boats in the river, which could so easily evade an attack.

On the way back he caused all the canoes to be drawn together in one place, and, having allowed his men to help themselves to their contents, set them on fire and destroyed them, thus making it impossible for the enemy to renew a form of attack which had been so dangerous for us. The boat-bridge over the fosse was also broken up and removed.

De Guzman, I now learnt for the first time, was in great haste to get back to the other gate, where heavy fighting had been going on all the morning. This was the cause of the long delay in coming to my assistance. Having his own hands full, he could not attend to my request until the news of the enemy having forced the gate and actually entered the town obliged him to come to my relief at all hazards. Fortunately at that moment there was a lull in the attack on the other gate. Though anxious to return at once with all available men, he left with me for the time ten companies, or a hundred men, to help in making the town secure on my side, desiring me at the same time to make haste and join him at the other gate, with as many men as I could safely bring with me.

We lost no time in setting to work to clear out the gateway and replace the shattered gate in its proper position. It could not at once be made as secure as it had been; but any early return of the Indians was no likely thing, after their disastrous failure in an attack which they could not repeat under anything like equally favourable circumstances. They had lost many men, their canoes had been destroyed, and any advantage they might have had from the country being flooded was rapidly disappearing. For we had noticed at daylight that the flood in the valley had gone down a little, and since then it had been rapidly decreasing, either through a fall in the river, or because of the water having found some outlet lower down the valley. It was now impossible to bring canoes, however light, close to the town, were any available for such a purpose. We were thus pretty secure on this side from any present danger. Confident in this belief, and having seen that everything was left in good order, I hastened across the town with two hundred men to the assistance of De Guzman.

CHAPTER XXXV.

At the land-gate—Burning arrows and cords—Attempt to fire the gate—Firing houses—How to prevent the burning of the town—The enemy must be driven further off—De Guzman's secret sortie by the water-gate—I march through the land-gate—Carry and destroy first breastwork—And the second—Fall back under town wall—Gate not to be opened—Our formation—We hold our own though outnumbered—Watching for De Guzman's appearance on the enemy's rear—An unexpected sight—Charge of Spanish horsemen—Rout of the Indians—A murderous pursuit—End of the great Indian expedition—Tuscaluza.

AT the land-gate (as I have called it) I found the attack by the enemy still going on. It had begun at the same time as that upon the other gate. During the nights the enemy had built a second abatis closer to the town than the first one, and behind both had massed numbers of warriors. Under cover of the darkness the Indians had also nearly filled up the ditch in front of the gate with fallen trees, branches, grass, and other materials. But instead of attacking the gate with a ram, as the others had done, their design was to destroy it by fire, and for this purpose they had piled against it, within the recess of the gateway, quantities of dried grass and faggots ready to be set on fire when the time came. Those preparations had been made so quietly that our people knew nothing of them until some time after daylight. The attack had commenced with the usual discharge of arrows. The nearer position of the new abatis gave the enemy more advantage than before, and made it much more difficult for our men to reply from the parapet. Presently the enemy began sending burning arrows against the gate. These are arrows to the points of which balls of inflammable material are tied, the balls being set alight just before the arrows are shot. Very soon the stuff piled in the gateway caught fire and commenced burning freely.

Instantly upon this discovery De Guzman sent away a number of men to bring water from the well. There being plenty of vessels of all kinds in the town, a good supply of water was soon brought up to the gate, dashed through every chink and opening, and poured in a stream underneath. This did not quench the fire, but helped to keep it down. Had necessity required it, De Guzman would have thrown the gate open and directly attacked the fire, taking the risk of a rush by the enemy, but this extreme course did not become necessary. The gate was made of thick planks of the evergreen oak, and stood the fire well. After half-an-hour's exertion the fire was extinguished, or had burnt itself out, without very serious damage to the gate. While the fire was at its height the Indians without made as if they intended to dash at the gate from the nearest abatis, and no doubt it was their plan to do so when the gate was destroyed. But fortunately the gate was not destroyed, and so the design of the enemy miscarried.

After this there was a lull in the hostilities, the disappointed Indians having to consider what they could next do to get the best of us. It was at this time that De Guzman had crossed the town to my relief. When I rejoined him afterwards on his own side, I found the attack, as he expected, had recommenced there in a new and more alarming form than ever. The Indians were now shooting burning arrows and slinging burning cords over the wall on to the roofs of the houses from the nearest abatis, and already two houses were on fire. The roofs of the houses being mostly of bark, reeds, and straw, and very dry, were liable to catch fire easily and to spread the flames rapidly.

As soon as I came up, De Guzman directed me to give my whole attention to checking and extinguishing the flames, and I at once set about doing so with the aid of the men I had brought with me. With the roofs already on fire little or nothing could be done, and my first task was to unroof the adjacent houses, so as to prevent the fire from spreading. I next sent up parties of my men to the tops of all the houses exposed to the fire of the enemy, and stationed them on and about the roofs wherever they could get a good footing. To these men, as fast as we could

manage it, I had passed up hides and quilts saturated with water, pots and other vessels of water, and long poles to assist them in reaching any place on fire. They watched the flight of the fire-arrows, and when one fell on a roof, they were on the alert to lay hold of it if they could and throw it off, or to extinguish it, or any flame it might cause, by means of the appliances they possessed. In this way we were able to prevent the fire from extending, though only by the greatest exertions and the utmost watchfulness and activity. Now and then a burning missile would reach some place not easy to get at, and the fire it created would only be mastered with great difficulty, if at all. At first those cords and arrows were few in number, but after a time they got more numerous, and our trouble increased to such an extent that it at last became evident that the flames would get the mastery of us unless we could speedily find some means of putting a stop to the fiery shower. I hastened to De Guzman and told him our state. He at once called the chief men together to consult upon the matter and consider what was to be done. It was plain enough that if the Indians from their present position, or one nearer still, continued to shoot as they had been doing, we should either perish in the flames or be forced by them to evacuate the town in the face of a powerful enemy. This view of the situation was recognised on all hands. How to stop the discharge of those burning missiles was the question to settle. De Guzman declared that there was nothing for it but a sortie in force. We must go out and fight the enemy in the open while we could yet do so to some purpose. It was better to do so now, while the town still remained to be saved, rather than be forced to do it later on when the town was destroyed. The choice was a hard one for us, and the alternative he proposed precarious, but it was our only chance and must be risked.

De Guzman's views were thoroughly concurred in by me, and unanimously approved by our friends, and he at once set about arranging his plans with his usual energy, and with all the sound judgment of a skilful general. It was not his purpose to depend alone upon a direct attack upon the enemy. He determined that a strong force should go out by the further gate, and going round the town by the brine springs, pass through the woods on that side, and so

get in the rear and on the right flank of the hostile Indians. Then, in concert with the troops coming directly from the town, a simultaneous attack could be made upon the enemy. If all went well, the Indians, while engaged in front, would be taken by surprise on the flank and rear, and might be overcome in spite of their great numerical superiority. To carry out this plan with the best chances of success, it was settled that the force going round the town should consist of five hundred of our best troops, and our three horses. An equal number of men in narrow column were, at the right time, to charge through the gate upon the front of the enemy. This force of a thousand men was the fullest we could employ in the field, and though (after our losses) it would leave but a mere handful of men in the town, it was little enough against so formidable a foe.

De Guzman himself took the command of the force going round the town, leaving me in charge of the rest. I crossed the town with him to see his party through and take his final instructions. From the top of the wall on that side no enemy was visible. The boats in the river had gone down towards the original encampment of the invaders, the attack upon this side of the town having to all appearances been quite given up. No Indians were in sight, all having been called away to the other side of the town, as we supposed. The flood water had still further abated, and I could see from our look-out that the river was lower than I had ever known it before. Everything was so far favourable for De Guzman's enterprise. I took leave of him with a heavy heart, not knowing if we should ever meet again; the gate was thrown open, the plank bridge laid across the ditch, and the column, headed by the horsemen, passed out of the town. Having withdrawn the bridge and made the gate secure, I watched the march of the column for some time from the top of the wall. It plashed through the shallow water towards the brine springs, mounted the wooded slope beyond, and disappeared in the forest.

My instructions were to wait for fully an hour before commencing the attack. It was thought that by that time De Guzman would be in or near a good position for advancing upon the enemy. The fighting was to begin on my

side, and to be kept up at all cost until De Guzman made his appearance. The more fully the attention of the enemy was directed to us, the better for the success of our general plan. All this time the Indians continued sending their burning arrows and cords into the town, causing us infinite trouble and alarm, and obliging us to unroof several houses. The time of labour and anxiety was prolonged to the end of the appointed hour, and it was with a sense of relief that I welcomed the approach of the moment when the intolerable annoyance of this fiery shower must cease.

The time being fully up, and my men in perfect readiness, I ordered the gate to be opened to its fullest extent. A few minutes sufficed to throw our plank bridge over the fosse, and out we marched through the gateway, five abreast. Once over the bridge, my men extended right and left so as to present to the enemy a line of fifty men abreast and ten in depth. This formation had been carefully explained to, and rehearsed by, the men within the town during the hour of delay, so that there was no difficulty nor loss of time in its adoption without. Behind us, pursuant to my orders, the bridge was withdrawn and the gate closed. One of the Spaniards I had left in charge of the gate; the other had gone with De Guzman. Our movements had been so rapid and precise, that I was able to give the word to advance before our foes had recovered from the surprise of seeing us marching out of the town. We went forward at a steady pace, using our bows and crossbows against the enemy, and supported by discharges of bolts and shafts from the wall, where I had left some of our best marksmen. The Indians, their surprise over, promptly responded in like fashion. As soon as we reached the beginning of the rising ground, we charged full upon the first abatis. In a moment we were amongst the branches of the work, tearing them away and trampling them under foot. This abatis was but a poor sort of thing, without any stability, serving more as a screen than a substantial defence. Its demolition brought us at once face to face with the Indians, and then the real fighting began. Our men kept their ranks well, and pressed forward upon the enemy with levelled spears and flashing swords and battle-axes. The Indians, closing upon us with leaps and bounds, were first received upon our spears, and those amongst them who were able to

push further had to reckon with men wielding weapons very superior to any in their possession.

Fighting in this way, sometimes in one spot, sometimes making a rush, but always advancing more or less, we forced our way to the second abatis. This we demolished as easily as the first. By this time the whole force of the enemy was gathering towards us, and I thought it prudent to fall back towards the gate. We had succeeded in our two immediate objects—first, stopping the shower of fire, and secondly, in engaging the whole attention of the enemy. This was all that could be done with the force at my command. Our retreat was managed by causing our front rank men to pass quickly to the rear, and by repeating the process until the desired position was gained. By this expedient we were always able to show a firm and fixed front to the enemy. The position I took up was in front of the gate, with the fosse behind us, and the men on the wall helping in our defence. I called aloud to the Spaniard to keep the gate fast, no matter what happened to us, for I thought he might suppose we were in distress, and anxious to re-enter the town. This was far from being our situation, for as yet nothing had occurred to daunt us, or make us despair of holding out until De Guzman appeared. Our formation was that of a solid half-circle or crescent, in front of the gate. Our three first ranks were composed of spearmen (the front one kneeling), presenting to the foe a triple line of bristling spears. Behind these were arrayed the men using battle-axes, swords, and crossbows. In this formation I felt we could long hold out against the great crowd of Indians in front of us. We had now secured their whole attention, and a splendid opportunity was afforded De Guzman to surprise them in the rear. They raged and yelled around our front, and, urged on by their leaders, made desperate attempts to break in upon us. Now and then they succeeded in making an opening in our line, but were as often beaten back by the inner ranks of our warriors. Such were the discipline and confidence of our men, that the gaps so made were promptly filled up by fresh spearmen, ready to meet the next rush of the enemy. We stood, in truth, like a fortress, within which our assailants might at times penetrate a little way, but in which they could secure no permanent footing. The

slaughter on the side of our enemies was immense, but on our side comparatively slight. They suffered most not only as the attacking party, but also because of their poor weapons and want of defensive armour, and by being exposed to our bowmen on the wall, to whom they could give but little attention.

Though confident in the security of our position, I was anxious for the coming of De Guzman to turn the tide of battle in our favour and enable us to assume the offensive. I looked from time to time in the direction where he was likely to appear, and at last I saw something which I had not expected, and which filled me with bewilderment and amazement. I saw emerging from the woods at the top of the slope, in rear of the enemy, a strange body of over twenty wild-looking horsemen, followed at no great distance by our Cherokee troops. At first I could scarcely believe that what I saw was real, and I thought I must be suffering from some kind of delusion, so totally incomprehensible was the spectacle presented. I called to Choquo and some of my Cherokee friends to tell me if what I saw was real. They saw what I saw, and with equal wonder. The horsemen looked like Indians both in dress and complexion, but managed their horses as only white men could, and they carried the long lances and swords of Spanish cavalry. Whilst still lost in conjecture as to whence De Guzman had conjured up those extraordinary horsemen, they extended themselves in a single line, changed their trot into a gallop, and came thundering down the incline, led by De Guzman and another, upon the rear of the great mob of Indians gathered around us. Above the din and uproar of the charge I could hear the Spanish cry of "St. Jago! St. Jago!" and knew that those weather-beaten and skin-clad horsemen must be Spaniards, and could scarcely be other than Spaniards of the army we had supposed lost in the western wilderness. Recovering from my bewilderment, I rushed to the front, and calling upon my men to follow me, charged upon the Indians, now confused and paralysed by the appearance of the horsemen and the attack on their rear. They had doubtless supposed that in us they had before them all the available force that could be brought against them, and were totally unprepared for this demonstration in their rear just as they seemed within reach of

victory. This discovery threw them into complete confusion, and no effort seemed to be made to rally them, or to unite them in some common purpose or joint action.

A most murderous contest now commenced, if, indeed, contest it could be called. The horsemen swept through the crowd of Indians, riding them down in numbers, and using their lances or swords right and left. Behind them came De Guzman's Cherokees in an extended line, plying sword and battle-axe upon the distracted Indians, who offered but feeble resistance. On the other side of the crowd my men were equally busy in the work of slaughter. The Indians had now neither front nor rear, nor plan nor purpose. As we drove them before us, De Guzman's Cherokees drove them back again upon us, giving them no rest nor respite. Thus attacked on all sides, and ploughed up by the charges of the horsemen, they could hold no ground, and could only seek safety in flight. The country down the valley was still open to them, and soon the great mass of those who remained were flying in that direction. Many could not get away, and others desperately stood their ground, but all who stayed were slain without mercy sooner or later. The main body, like a flock of sheep before a pack of wolves, flew down the valley at full speed, pursued by the horsemen and our men on foot. The horsemen hung on the rear of the crowd, and lanced or cut down the Indians at discretion, or drove them in groups to the right and left, where they fell a prey to the Cherokees. A few of the swifter-footed fugitives reached the hills by the side of the valley, or the river on the opposite side, into which they plunged. The main body, greatly reduced in number, at length gained the shelter of the forest at the end of the valley, and escaped further pursuit. Later on the fleet of boats was seen going down the river, laden with fugitives. The rout was most complete, and the losses of the enemy from first to last must have been little short of two thousand men.

The expedition against us was no doubt the greatest that had ever been organised by the Indians of Florida, but neither its numbers nor the influence of Tuscaluza had saved it from destruction. The gigantic form of this chief had often been observed from the walls of the town, directing the operations against us, and it was confidently

stated that his dead body had been found amongst the slain down the valley; but this was not true, as will hereafter appear, though of his ultimate fate nothing is known. He appeared to take no personal part in the actual fighting, though surely his was the guiding spirit in all that was attempted against the town. Had his military knowledge and resources been at all equal to his intrepidity of soul and influence over his fellow-countrymen, I had not lived to write this narrative, or might have been obliged to make it a record of cruel disasters in these later pages. But, all being said, Tuscaluza was a mere untutored barbarian in a nation as ignorant as himself, destitute of all power or means of making war in any but the rudest and most primitive way. He was thus unable to overcome the resistance of one little town, defended on a civilized basis by a few Europeans. To him, however, is due the credit (if such it be) of having contributed largely to the ruin of the splendid expedition of De Soto, and the death, broken-hearted, of its noble leader. Almost from the first arrival of the army in Florida he harassed it by incessant hostilities, and when the remnant of it disappeared in the wilderness of the west, he contrived to pursue it with his vengeance. Emerging thence (to anticipate my story), he was the last to give up the chase of the miserable fraction of it which at last managed to escape from the accursed country down the Rio Grande. Truly Tuscaluza was a man who had in him all the essential qualities of a great leader, but his circumstances afforded no fair scope for the exercise of his rare abilities; and he who, in a more favourable situation, might have made for himself a world-wide fame, will leave but an uncouth name and a transient reputation in the memory of a few passing strangers.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Festivity and rejoicing—The state of the Spaniards and their horses—Exchange of news—How O'Donel came to us—The news of the army—Sufferings and losses in Los Vaqueros and elsewhere—They come to a boundless wilderness—March back to the Rio Grande—Still greater sufferings and heavier losses—Mortality of men and horses—The river at last—More deaths—Putting things in order in Cargutah—A council and its results—I go in advance to the army—My instructions to Aymay about our pearls and gold.

THE next three days were given up mainly to festivities and the interchange of news between us and the Spaniards. Of the festivities nothing need be said, except that they were heartily appreciated by the half-starved Spaniards. In all respects they were kindly and hospitably entertained by our people, who not only fed them on the best the town could supply, but cleansed them and gave them new clothing to replace the foul rags they had on. For those Spaniards were truly in sorry plight when they came into the town, and both they and their horses wayworn to the last degree. They had scarcely a scrap of European clothing left, and such as they had was patched and eked out with skins and bits of Indian cloth of various sorts and colours. Instead of boots their legs were wrapped in bandages of raw hide, and their feet covered in the same way, or with the native skin shoes called moccasins. Strips and thongs of raw hide were used as bridles and stirrup straps, and such worn-out saddles as remained were clumsily covered with pieces of bear skins and buffalo hides. Their horses were shoeless, and not one free from injured hoofs, back sores, and bad legs. Altogether the men presented a painful contrast to our well-fed, trim, and soldierly Cherokees. The Spaniards fed as men do who have long been in a state of starvation; and they enjoyed

the comforts of our town with the zest of people long strangers to civil society, regular diet, and a roof over their heads.

Of news there was, of course, abundance to tell, and an eagerness on both sides to hear and impart it. At the very earliest opportunity, and before the Spaniards had yet time to fully satisfy the cravings of nature, we got from them an account of the circumstances which had led to their unexpected appearance in our neighbourhood, and at a moment so critical and important for us. Luis de Moscoso had, it appeared, at last turned back from his march towards the west, and, on his way to regain the Rio Grande, had bethought himself of De Guzman, and sent Captain O'Donel and the other horsemen to search him out and bring him back. It was while this force was on its way to the town of Cargutah that De Guzman, at the head of his Cherokees, came upon it in the forest. The astonishment was mutual and extreme. The surprise of De Guzman at seeing before him what he took to be a force of mounted Indians, was not less than that of the Spaniards at being confronted by a whole regiment of undoubted Indians, ranged and armed after the European fashion. Fortunately this mutual surprise created a pause, otherwise the two forces might have fallen foul of each other as enemies; and the interchange of a few words in Spanish soon set matters right. The leader of the Spaniards stated his errand, but De Guzman at once replied that he had no intention of returning to the army. O'Donel threatened to take him back forcibly, whereupon De Guzman answered that if he (O'Donel) conceived it to be his duty to endeavour to take him by force, he might try to do so there and then, or later on if he preferred. The Irishman, though as hot-headed as the Spaniard, was prudent enough to recognise that he could do nothing effective with his five-and-twenty worn-out troopers against such a force as De Guzman commanded; and learning from the latter the errand he was upon, agreed to help him in it, leaving open for the present the question of De Guzman's return to the army. This offer De Guzman warmly accepted, and cheered the hearts of the Spaniards by the assurance that they should have comfortable quarters, and abundance of everything as long as they liked, in the town. That is how

the Spaniards came to our aid, in the manner already stated.

As to the general fortunes of the army, O'Donel and his men had a sad story to tell of sufferings and privations in the Far West and on the march there, and back to the Rio Grande, where it now was. Part of this story we already knew through the two Spaniards, who had left the army in the country or province to which the name of Los Vaqueros was given. The following is the substance of the rest of the narrative:—

For many weeks after quitting the province of the Herdsmen, the army continued to wander westward, finding the country growing wilder and wilder, and the inhabitants more and more savage and intractable. After traversing more than a hundred leagues they came to a vast uninhabited region, where they were again reduced to living on herbs and roots. Far away in the distance they saw a chain of lofty mountains and extensive forests, but no sign of cities or inhabitants. The Indians they had recently met with appeared to be homeless savages, living on wild fruits, herbs, and roots, and by hunting and fishing. They were quite a different people from the comparatively civilized and settled natives hitherto met with.

The Spaniards were now thoroughly disheartened. They had come upon no traces of their own countrymen from Mexico, and there were no signs and no reports of civilized native communities anywhere in front of them. They seemed to have come to the end of the world, where there was nothing but savage waste of boundless extent, occupied (where inhabited at all) by the lowest savages, with whom it was impossible to communicate, or to establish friendly relations. Winter was approaching, and if they lingered much longer the snows and rains would cut off their retreat, and cause them to perish miserably of cold and hunger. Luis de Moscoso was weary in mind and body and longed to be in a place where his sleep might not be broken by continual alarms. Calling a council of his officers, he proposed giving up all further progress to the west, making the best of their way back to the Rio Grande, and there building vessels to take them down the river to the Sea of Mexico. These proposals were by no means universally relished, for, in spite of all their cruel

experiences and bitter disappointments, there were some who had still a lingering hope of finding a rich native state, the plunder of which would repay them for all their toil and sufferings. However, the more prudent counsels prevailed in the end, and it was finally decided to retrace their steps to the Rio Grande.

The Spaniards had now a long and dreary march before them, with none of their former hopes to cheer them on the way. They had a country to traverse the resources of which had already been wasted and exhausted by their foraging parties, and the inhabitants exasperated against them. They sought to avoid those disadvantages by inclining somewhat to the south-east, so as to avoid the tracts they had desolated, and find regions better supplied with provisions. They travelled by forced marches, taking every precaution against provoking the natives. These, however, they found everywhere hostile, and on the alert, as if inspired by a common understanding. The Spaniards were incessantly attacked, losing heavily in men and horses, and failing in all their efforts to make friends with the natives. In those western regions, going and returning, they sustained more disasters than in any other part of the country, and that without being once able to come to close quarters with the enemy.

After a certain time they took a north-easterly course, in order to strike the great river at a place they were familiar with. But while still a long way from the river, the winter commenced to set in with severity. They had to endure violent gales, heavy rains, and piercing cold. In such an inhospitable country it was impossible to go into winter quarters. They had neither the means nor the inclination to delay their march, and the sooner to reach the termination of their journey they continued to press forward through all weather, being often obliged to encamp for the night drenched with rain and covered with mud. Then they had to go in quest of food, being generally compelled to obtain it from the natives by violence, and often at the expense of many lives. The rivers became swollen with rain, and even the brooks were unfordable, so that almost every day the men were engaged in making rafts. At some places they were detained seven or eight days, either from want of materials to make rafts, or on account of the hostility of the natives.

Often, too, they found no place where they could lie down at night, the ground being covered with water and mud. In such situations the cavalry passed the night sitting upon their horses, and the footmen stood up to their knees in water. For clothing they had jackets of skin which served for shirt, doublet, and coat, and were almost always wet through. Many were barelegged and barefooted.

Under such dreadful privations men and horses sickened and died rapidly. Every day two or three, and on one day seven, Spaniards died, and the deaths of the Indian servants were so numerous that at last hardly any were left. There being no means of treating or nursing the sick, nor of carrying them, they had to drag themselves along after the army as best they could, until they fell down and died by the way or were killed by Indians. All the effective horses were needed to repel the constant attacks of the enemy, and the rest were too infirm to be used for transporting the sick or wounded.

At length the Spaniards reached the end of their terrible march. Their hearts leaped within them for joy when they came in sight of the great river once more, for they regarded it not only as a place where they could find rest for a time, but as the highway by which they could escape from a land of miseries and disasters. They took possession of a village called Aminoya as a haven of repose, and fervently thanked God that they had at length reached a spot where they might rest awhile from their toils and sufferings. They reached this place none too soon, for had their march been much further prolonged, or had they not been fortunate in finding in the village a good supply of food, they must inevitably have perished to a man. As it was, many of them only reached the place to lie down and die. The excitement of the march had stimulated and sustained them at the expense of their vitality, and when exertion was no longer necessary, and plenty of rest and food available, they fell into a strange lethargy from which nothing could arouse them, and in the course of a few days over fifty died in this singular way.

Such, in general outline, and omitting many particulars, was the heartrending account given us by O'Donel and his men of the sufferings of the army. We, on our part, had a pleasanter tale to tell of our own fortunes, and one to which

the Spaniards listened with greedy attention. My own personal adventures particularly interested them, not only because of their strangeness, but also for the reason that no one of the army had supposed that I was alive or would ever more be heard of. My cousin Henry (who I was glad to hear had survived all the hardships of the double march) had long given me up for dead, and had caused masses to be said for the repose of my soul.

Amidst those first days of festivity and gossip, neither De Guzman nor myself would permit necessary work to be neglected. The first and most urgent was the disposal of the great number of dead bodies lying close to the town and throughout the valley. These we got rid of, partly by throwing them into the river, partly by burying, and partly by burning, according to the position in which they lay. Our next attention was given to the opening in the bank of the river. This we filled up by means of trunks of trees, and baskets and bags filled with earth and stone, the lowness of the river making our task an easy one. Though there was now no danger of a renewal of an attack upon the town, De Guzman would not rest until everything connected with its security and defence was completed, and made as perfect as before the late events. In matters of watch and ward he was as strict as if an enemy were again approaching our walls. Though by no means afraid of the Spaniards now in our midst, he so ordered matters as to preclude them from exercising any authority in the town, and, had occasion required, they could have been readily overmastered and made prisoners. But no such occasion arose, for O'Donel was quite aware of his impotence to employ force, and his war-worn men were more than content to rest and refresh themselves amongst the friendly and hospitable Cherokees. Indeed, the danger rather was (so far as O'Donel was concerned) that his men might refuse to return with him to the army, and choose rather to remain amongst the Cherokees, enjoying a life of ease and plenty, marrying agreeable native wives, and ranking as a superior caste in the community. It is certain that had it suited De Guzman's views to encourage them in such a course, few, if any, of them would ever have rejoined the army. O'Donel was quite aware of all this, and for that and

other reasons acted with the utmost moderation and circumspection.

It was not until the fourth or fifth day after the arrival of the Spaniards, that the question of what was to be settled as regards the future was fully and formally gone into at a council composed of the leading Indian lords, De Guzman, O'Donel, and myself. At this meeting De Guzman definitely stated his determination to remain at Cargutah, and never to return to the army. O'Donel made little pretence at persuading him to a contrary course, for already he well knew he was determined to remain. For myself it was equally well known that I had always the purpose of rejoining the army should the opportunity ever offer; and now that it had come, my mind was made up to return with O'Donel, though within the last few days I had been privately entreated by De Guzman and our Indian friends to remain with them. O'Donel rejoiced at and applauded my decision, saying that though he had come to bring back De Guzman, he would be content to return with me instead. He was furthermore desirous of taking with him the two Spaniards and the negro we had rescued from the Creeques; but De Guzman said that those men should only go back of their own free choice, and should not be forced either to go with O'Donel or remain in Cargutah. To this O'Donel assented, and the three of them being called in, they one and all elected to remain with De Guzman and the Cherokees. This was a mere formality, for it was known prior to the meeting that the men had resolutely decided not to go back.

Those matters being settled and agreed upon, other things were considered and arranged without difficulty. In the main these were that O'Donel and his men should repose themselves some time longer in the town, not only on their own account, but for the good of their horses, many of whom were in a very bad state, needing treatment, good feeding and rest, as well as shoeing and the renewal of their trappings. Meanwhile, I was to take with me five of the troopers and ride to De Moscoso to inform him of all that had taken place, and to bring back his instructions to O'Donel. In this matter I had a private understanding with De Guzman. Though it was

not probable that Moscoso would think of embroiling himself with the Cherokees, or consider it worth his while to march on Cargutah, yet, to guard against anything in the nature of a surprise from that quarter, I considered myself justified in promising De Guzman to send back a timely message to him by a confidential Indian (to accompany me as a servant), in the event of Moscoso entertaining hostile designs.

Everything being now settled, I prepared for the journey. We selected five of the best of O'Donel's horses, and five of the healthiest of the cavalry men. We had the horses well groomed, properly accoutred, and shod in the best manner we could. A sixth horse was selected for my man Choquo, and also to carry certain packets of our nails and bolts and other metal things, which O'Donel assured me would be most acceptable for the boat building which Moscoso was about to commence. I decided to ride my own mare; so that we should take with us seven horses and five Indian servants, in addition to Choquo—in all, twelve men and seven horses. I took leave of my wife Aymay, directing her, in my absence, to make every preparation for accompanying me, on my return, for our long and probably adventurous journey with the army. I had before then told her all I could about the length, the hardships, and the perils of that journey, and how, if successful, it would take her to a new and strange country, where she would for ever be separated from her own people; and I had freely left it to her to say whether she would come with me or not. She never hesitated for a moment, but said she would come with me, whether to live or to die, and had no thought of remaining behind. I expected no less, from what I knew to be her womanly devotion, and her loving and childlike reliance upon me in all matters. The preparations I enjoined her to make had chief relation to the wealth in our possession—the great store of pearls we had, and a certain quantity of fine gold, which I had accumulated amongst a people who had little use for it, and to which even De Guzman was indifferent in his new life. All these riches (together with some stones of apparent value) would be of the greatest use to us in a civilized country; so I told Aymay to make some long and narrow bags of soft skin, which could be worn as belts, and to fill these with the

pearls and the gold, and have everything ready for our long and hazardous journey by the time I returned to Cargutah. I may say at once that I never did return to the town to take final leave of De Guzman and our good Indian friends, for, on arriving at the camp of the army, the General found it necessary to retain me for many urgent services; but he made up for this disappointment to me by taking care that my wife should be honourably escorted to the camp, and in all respects treated as if she had been a Spanish lady instead of an Indian woman.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

My arrival at Aminoya—Conference with De Moscoso and the officers—Friendly overtures with De Guzman and the Cherokees—I assist in the shipbuilding work—Lack of metal and good workmen—I send for both to Cargutah—Am forced to remain in the camp—Aymay joins me—Progress of the work—Preparing for the voyage—Slaughtering pigs and horses—Horse boats—Fortunate launch of the brigantines—Their structure, &c.—Arranging for bestowal of Aymay—Our re-marriage—Kindness of De Moscoso—Henry Stanley and I made joint captains of one of the brigantines.

ARRIVED at Aminoya (I dwell not upon the journey thither, which was uneventful enough), my appearance caused the greatest astonishment and no small excitement in the camp. Amongst the first to greet me was my cousin Henry, who received me with open arms and tears of joy, as one restored from the dead. Escaping from congratulations and questions, I had myself conducted as quickly as possible to the quarters of the Governor, Luis de Moscoso, to report myself and deliver the letter, written on a piece of deerskin, which O'Donel had entrusted me with.

For fully two hours I remained with the General and his officers, narrating all that had befallen me, and the present state of things at Cargutah, in all of which they were much interested. In the discussion which followed it was the common opinion that it was needless, and indeed impossible, to trouble further about De Guzman; and that O'Donel and his force should be recalled as soon as might be, without embroiling themselves in any way with the Cherokees. I strongly advised this latter course, not only because it was the most politic under the circumstances, but also for the sake of my old friends at Cargutah. I represented that the Cherokees, in their present state of civilization and military efficiency, might be dangerous enemies, and could be very useful friends in the actual

ituation of the army. In proof of this, I produced the bags and baskets of metal things I had brought with me, which could not but be of the utmost value in the contemplated boat-building, and in the great scarcity of metal of all kinds from which the Spaniards now suffered. I made no doubt that further supplies of the same kind could be had from Cargutah if friendly relations were maintained with the Cherokees; and I likewise spoke in high, but not exaggerated, terms of the skill of many of the Cherokees as workmen.

At the close of the conference Moscoso authorised me to give full effect to the recommendations I had been making in the manner I thought best, and with the least possible delay. I accordingly wrote a long letter to De Guzman, telling him of the friendly disposition of the General towards him, and the desire to secure his assistance and good will in the preparations for ship-building. This letter I submitted to the General, and he, approving of it, countersigned it, and himself wrote a letter to be sent with it to O'Donel, instructing him to act towards De Guzman in a friendly and harmonious spirit, and to return to the camp as soon as might be convenient, with such useful things as De Guzman might be willing to supply him with. Those letters (together with a verbal message) I entrusted to the confidential man of De Guzman, and gave him my mare to make the journey back to Cargutah with. Two other Cherokees accompanied him, each provided with a horse from the army. The three took their departure early on the morning after my arrival at the camp.

The Governor had asked me to postpone my return to Cargutah for a few days in order to assist him in the numerous preparations that were being made at the camp for the voyage down the river. There was truly much to be done and few to do it, and such a lack of adequate means as to call for the exercise of the greatest ingenuity. The keels of seven brigantines had been laid down on a space of ground near the river, under the directions of a Genoese named Francisco, who heretofore had been very proficient in constructing bridges, rafts, and boats for the army. He was the only one who had any pretence to a knowledge of ship-building, though another Genoese and a certain Catalonian knew something of ship-caulking and

other minor arts relating to the building of vessels. There were four or five Biscayans who were fairly good carpenters, and a Portuguese who had learnt the use of the saw and other tools while a slave among the Moors of Fez. There was also a cooper who knew how to make water-casks, but at present he was too ill to do anything, though later on he rendered good service. A great deal of heavy work had to be done in felling trees and reducing the timber to suitable planks, and officers and men alike were employed in cutting and drawing timber, twisting cordage, shaping oars, and such like. Not a man could afford to be idle and, indeed, all worked with good will.

In all this there was employment enough for me, and I longed for the assistance of some of my Cherokee workmen, knowing how useful they would be in the kind of all-round work which was going on. With the consent of the Governor I despatched another messenger to Cargutah with a letter to De Guzman, begging him to send us a hundred of the best workmen of Cargutah as soon as possible, with such tools and materials as he could spare. It was necessary to set up a forge and smithy with all their appurtenances, and to employ men in the making of nails, spikes, and other articles of metal necessary for our purpose. Meanwhile every bit of iron in the camp was collected to be converted into such articles. The chains were removed from such Indian slaves as remained, and the iron bits and stirrups were taken from the accoutrements of the horses, and replaced by others made of wood. Day after day I became more and more involved in the work around me, became more continuously in requisition, and more laden with responsibility. At last it seemed to De Moscoso, and, indeed, to myself also, that all thought of my return to Cargutah must be abandoned. That was why (as already intimated) I never returned thither to take leave of my friends and bring away my wife. But, in respect to Aymay, I had the General's word of honour that she should be restored to me, as far as lay in his power. The promise was honourably kept, for when O'Donel at length returned to the camp he brought her back with him. With him also came the hundred Cherokees I had demanded of De Guzman, as well as a good supply of tools and articles of iron, likewise quantities of bronze and copper sent by De

uzman as a present to the Governor. O'Donel returned om Cargutah with only fifteen cavaliers, the rest having een left behind on account of sickness, which made it npossible for them to travel. He had also left behind ›ur or five horses for the same reason. It was supposed ıat men and horses would be sufficiently recovered to ejoin the army before it took its departure, but they ever did so, and their remaining behind was no doubt f advantage to De Guzman and his little kingdom. We eard from Cargutah on two or three more occasions fter the departure of O'Donel, but I never again saw)e Guzman.

Our working strength now being increased by the return ıf O'Donel's men and the arrival of my Cherokees, more apid progress was made with the ship-building. One of the irst things I now set about doing was the erection of sheds ›ver the places where the brigantines were being built. These protected the men and materials from the heavy ains which had just set in, and enabled the work to go on vithout interruption. We made charcoal, set up a forge vith all necessary appliances, and built workshops for the ifferent classes of work—as carpentering, rope-making, the roduction of resin, sail-making, &c. In all this the Cherokees were of the utmost use to us. The metal we ıad procured from Cargutah was also most acceptable, though not nearly enough to supply all our wants. However, we made the best use of all we had, and made wood serve our purposes when metal fell short.

It now became necessary to think about provisioning the vessels for a voyage which would certainly be long, though we could not say how long, having no idea of the length of the river. It was curious that the Spaniards, through all their wanderings and sufferings, had been able to keep with them a number of the swine which they had originally brought with them into Florida to stock their intended settlements. The swine had in fact multiplied during the march, and others, which had strayed away, or been given to friendly Indians, had likewise produced their natural increase, some of which the Spaniards were able to recover. All were now killed and converted into bacon, with the exception of a dozen and a half, which were retained alive in case it should be found desirable or necessary to found

a settlement on the sea coast, and a few more which, at my instance, were sent, with some weapons and armour, to De Guzman, when the hundred Cherokees were dismissed and sent home. Of fifty horses that remained, twenty of the least valuable were killed for food. This was a painful necessity to the Spaniards, on account of their long companionship with those noble creatures in all sorts of dangers and toil, and the faithful services they had rendered. The poor animals were tied to stakes at night, a vein was opened, and they were left to bleed to death. The flesh was then parboiled, dried in the sun, and laid up amongst the sea stores. Of those that remained alive, three of the less efficient were set aside to be sent to De Guzman, and the remainder had special vessels prepared for their conveyance down the river, the brigantines not being strong enough nor large enough to hold them. Small and stout boats were built and linked together two and two, and on these, when the time came, the horses were embarked in such fashion that their fore feet rested in one boat and their hind feet in another. As there were not wanting indications of an intention on the part of the hostile Indians to renew their attacks upon the army, the horse-boats were boarded around and covered by thick hides, to protect the horses from arrows.

When all was prepared for the voyage, a difficulty arose about getting the brigantines into the water. Being built with thin planks, fastened with nails which were neither long enough nor strong enough, nor sufficiently numerous, there was reason to fear that they would give way when being dragged to the water. Fortunately, while this apprehension was troubling us, there came an unusual swelling of the river, which reached the stocks upon which the vessels rested, so that they were all launched with the greatest ease and without the slightest mishap. These brigantines were in fact merely large barks, open except at the bow and stern, where they were decked over to protect the stores. The bulwarks were composed of boards and hides. Each had seven oars on a side, at which every man was expected to take his turn, except the captains, of whom there were two to each vessel, so that in an emergency one might act on land while the other remained on board.

I was a good deal troubled in my mind about the disposal of Aymay during the voyage we were about to enter upon. But first I must state here that I had lost no time, after the arrival of Aymay in the camp, in attending to two matters which deeply concerned our spiritual welfare. I sought out Father Juan de Gallegos, and made him fully acquainted with all that related to my intimacy and union with Ucita's daughter. Having heard me to the end, he gave the opinion that Aymay's baptism had probably been sufficiently regular to be effective, though it were best that she should undergo the ceremony a second time, to make sure. But as for our marriage, so-called, it was no marriage at all, but an act of sacrilege on the part of De Guzman. Accordingly Aymay was re-baptized conditionally, and afterwards on the same day we were married in due form, and according to the rites of the Church. Luis de Moscoso stood sponsor for Aymay on her baptism, and gave her away at the marriage ceremony.

I was now much relieved by knowing that Aymay was truly Christianized and regularly married, those facts reconciling me more than I had been before to the perils and dangers of the voyage which lay before us. Still the difficult question of how best to establish her on board ship remained to be answered. She was the only Indian woman De Moscoso would permit to embark, and indeed the only woman who would sail with the army, with the exception of a Spanish woman, the wife of a soldier, who had been with us from the first, and gone through all the campaigns and hardships of the expedition. De Moscoso thought himself under special obligations to me, and had promised that I should not be separated from Aymay. His graciousness in making such an exception in my favour was not lessened in my eyes because he might have had some suspicion that, had he refused to make it, I would certainly follow the example of De Guzman in deserting the army, and go back to Cargutah with my lawful wife. As to the mode of accommodating the two women, the Governor was willing to do anything that might be thought best. At last it was settled that Henry Stanley and myself should be joint captains of one of the brigantines, and that the two women were to be accommodated in our vessel as well as circumstances would permit, the husband of the Spanish woman

being also on board our boat. In the end, with a little assistance from the carpenters, the women were very comfortably housed in the space under the fore-deck, which was made into a kind of little cabin, so as to secure their complete privacy.

We dismissed the Cherokees to their homes, with such presents (in addition to the swine and the horses) as our poor circumstances permitted us to make. We gave them most of the tools and other things we had used in building the ships, and many miscellaneous articles which we could not take on board ship.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The voyage begins—Hostile Indians—The striped banner of Tuscaluza—Great fleet and extraordinary canoes—Artful mode of attacking us—No respite day or night—Wounded and worn out—Canoes and horse-boats taken—We are surprised on shore, and lose our last horses—Loss of forty-eight men—Nearing the sea—A fight among the reeds—Our sea course—To the west by the land—Driven out to sea—Water exhausted—Favourable change—We procure water—Nearing civilization—A violent storm—The brigantines dispersed—Gaining a port—A Spanish settlement—Hospitable reception—Returning thanks to the Almighty—Our forlorn condition.

ON the second day of July, 1543, all that remained of the army embarked on board the seven brigantines. Of the numerous and valiant host which had entered upon the bold but disastrous expedition for the conquest of Florida, not quite three hundred and fifty remained, and these in a most wretched plight—their once brilliant armour and arms battered, broken, and rusted, or gone altogether, and their rich raiment reduced to rags, or replaced by skins of wild beasts; themselves haggard, sickly, and broken-spirited.

During the latter part of our stay at Aminoya we found that the hostile Indians were gathering against us in extraordinary numbers, and with larger and more numerous canoes than I had ever seen before. And once again, to our dismay, we beheld the ominous striped skin banner displayed, and knew that we had again to deal with the indomitable Tuscaluza. Our intentions were, of course, known to all the Indians, and it seemed to be the design of the hostile tribes to make one last supreme effort to destroy us before we could escape from the country. As we got well into the river, a great fleet of canoes, doubtless the combined force of many caciques, hung upon our rear and watched our movements. Some of those vessels were of extraordinary size, having from fourteen to twenty-five

paddles on each side, and carrying from thirty to seventy warriors. They could dart across the water with the swiftness of racehorses, and with a speed of which our boats were quite incapable. Both the Indians and their canoes were curiously painted in a several manner, as if to distinguish those of one chief from the others. One canoe (or set of canoes) would be painted blue within and without, the paddles of the same colour, and all the warriors blue from the feet to the feather-adorned tuft of hair on the top of the head. With others the colour would be yellow, white, green, violet, or black. I had not previously seen the like of this. The effect was striking and awe-inspiring, and we all felt that such an extraordinary display meant mischief for us.

For the first few days we were unmolested, the canoes following us without attempting an attack, the Indians scoffing at us and chanting war songs, keeping time with their paddles. On the fourth day, about noon, there began a movement among them. Separating into three divisions, van, centre, and rear, they took the right of us: then the canoes forming the van darted forward, and gliding rapidly along our whole length and front, discharged showers of arrows at us as they passed, wounding many of our men, in spite of their shields and the bulwarks of the vessels. They then turned away and stationed themselves on the right bank. The canoes forming the centre then came on and performed exactly the same manœuvres, finally taking up position in front of the van. The rear next did likewise, and took position in front of the other two divisions. This mode of attack was repeated over and over again with admirable regularity and precision. They never gave us a moment's rest during the remainder of the day, and all night they harassed us with incessant alarms. Day after day, and night after night, the same thing went on, until we were worn out for want of rest. Our losses were heavy, and we were able to exact little satisfaction from foes we could not close with. We had only our cross-bows and some longbows to use. Our arquebuses would have been of service in this kind of fighting, but all our powder having been exploded at Movill, the arquebuses had been wrought up with other articles into iron materials for the brigantines. We could only act on the defensive, keeping

the enemy at bay as best we could, and at the same time making all speed down the river. This harassing kind of warfare went on without cease until most of our people were wounded, in spite of the bulwarks, buffalo hides, quilts, and double mats, and all of us were almost dead with fatigue. The Indians took a number of our canoes, and managed to destroy, directly or indirectly, all our horses except eight.

At length, having got a long way down the river, our foes seemed disposed to quit us, and allowed us to get a good distance from them. The Governor seeing this, and thinking that we were nearer the sea than we really were at the time, became desirous of sending a party on shore to replenish our stock of food, which was running very low. Observing a small village on the banks of the river, he sent Gonzola Silvestre on shore with a hundred men and the eight remaining horses. The inhabitants fled with loud cries at the appearance of such strange people. In the village Silvestre found abundance of maize and dried fruits, and a number of dressed skins, amongst which a marten skin, painted in stripes and decorated with pearls, which appeared to be a banner. While he and his party were taking possession of everything of value, they heard the trumpet from the Governor's ship sounding the recall. Hurrying towards the river, they saw the fleet of canoes approaching at great speed to cut them off from the ships, while another band of Indians were coming at them along the shore. Springing into their canoes, they pulled with desperation, and succeeded in escaping, but only at the cost of leaving the horses behind them. The Indians vented their fury upon those animals. We could see the gallant creatures defending themselves by kicking and plunging. Some of the Indians were so frightened at what they took to be ferocious monsters, that they leaped into the water; but others more courageous, or better acquainted with the animals, hunted them about like so many deer, and finally destroyed them all with their arrows. Thus miserably perished the last of the three hundred and fifty noble beasts which had entered Florida with De Soto's army. Seeing these faithful creatures slaughtered without being able to save them, drew tears from the eyes of many of our people.

The Indian flotilla still continued to follow us at a distance, attacking any vessel that lagged behind, and causing us much annoyance and unrest. On the seventeenth day of our harassed voyage, an ill-advised and unauthorised attack was made in canoes upon the Indians. The danger in which the rash assailants soon found themselves drew others to their aid, with the ultimate and disastrous result of the loss of no less than forty-eight of our men, four others escaping. In this unfortunate encounter we lost Juan de Guzman, brother to Diego, who had stayed at Cargutah. The survivors of the conflict saw him carried off in one of the enemies' canoes, but whether dead or alive they could not say. The Indians rejoiced greatly at this success. All the rest of the day and during the succeeding night, they kept up continual shouts of triumph. When the sun rose on the following morning they appeared to worship it, and then raising a deafening shout, accompanied by the sound of their earthenware trumpets, shells and drums, they turned their prows up the river and left us at peace.

By this time the river had expanded into a mighty stream, several leagues broad, so that when we were in the midst of it we could see no land on either side. We kept the centre of the current in order not to wander into any deep bay, making excellent speed by reason of a favouring wind, and the constant use of our oars. On the twentieth day of the voyage we came to a large floating island formed of vast quantities of driftwood, and beyond this was an uninhabited island formed by alluvial deposits. From those signs we judged we were in the mouth of the great river, and not far from the sea.

As we were greatly in need of repose, and it was necessary to overhaul the vessels and make other preparations for the sea voyage, we steered for the island of driftwood, where we found a secure harbour for the brigantines. Moored to the trunks of large trees embedded in the floating mass of timber, they were as secure as if at a pier-head. We then commenced refitting and repairing them. The few hogs remaining were now killed and salted down. Those labours took but a little time, and on their completion, the men, who had scarcely slept for three weeks, were left to repose themselves. So

exhausted were they from toil and constant watchfulness, that they lay for two days in a state of torpidity like dead men, and could only be roused with the utmost difficulty.

About noon on the third day, however, our quietude was broken by the appearance of enemies. Seven canoes issued from the reeds and rushes, and when within hail a gigantic Indian, black as a negro, either from paint or natural colour, stood up in the prow of the foremost and addressed us in a thundering and angry voice, accompanied by menacing looks and gestures. After his harangue the canoes shot back again amongst the reeds, where, from time to time, other canoes were perceived gliding about as if in ambush. We understood enough of the words of the black warrior to know that he threatened our destruction. Our position was precarious, for a bold enemy might succeed in firing our ships where they lay. Moscoso, fearing this, determined to be beforehand with the enemy, so he directed a party of us (including myself) to proceed in five canoes and beat up the cane brake where the Indians lurked. We were twenty-five in all, mostly crossbow-men. We soon found the enemy's canoes, drawn up in battle array among the reeds, in formidable numbers. The Indians waited quietly until we were well within bowshot, and then let fly a cloud of arrows at us, wounding several of our men. They then fell back in good order among the rushes, and drew up to receive us a second time in the same way as before. In this way they wheeled about like so many well-trained horsemen, sending shower after shower of arrows at us. On our side we kept up a well-directed discharge of bolts and arrows, inflicting some losses upon them. At length we were able to make a rush and come to close quarters with them, overturning three of their canoes and killing most of their crews, and putting the whole armament to flight. We, however, came out of the affray very roughly handled, most of us being wounded, more or less seriously. De Moscoso, seeing that we had not disposed of the enemy in any conclusive way, and fearing a night attack on the boats, made sail for the uninhabited island, under the lee of which we anchored in forty fathoms of water. We slept

on our arms on board that night ready for action, but the enemy did not trouble us again.

When day dawned, the Governor called the officers together to determine the course of the fleet, now that we were nearing the sea. To attempt crossing to Cuba or Hispaniola was deemed altogether too great an undertaking for our frail crafts. Besides, not knowing exactly where we were, and being unprovided with nautical instruments, we could not tell the direction of those islands. Juan de Anasco warmly urged the advisability of sailing out to sea in a south-westerly direction, by which the coast of Mexico could be reached in ten or twelve days. He drew a map of the coast on a piece of deerskin, showing that from the place we were now supposed to be, the coast bore east and west for a great distance, and then ran north and south to the Mexican shores. By following the coast-line the journey would be enormously extended, whereas by sailing as he suggested, we should follow a short straight line, instead of one greatly curved and vastly longer. The knowledge and the judgment of Anasco were alike mistrusted (though afterwards both were shown to be perfectly correct in this matter), and it was decided to steer to the west, keeping the land on our right hand, whither we might resort under stress of weather or for any other serious reason.

On that understanding we sailed away from the uninhabited island, but it was still several days before we got fully into the briny water of the sea. Then we experienced violent and contrary winds that prevented us from making the shore as we had intended. We were tossed about on the sea for so many days that all our fresh water was exhausted, and we were in danger of perishing from thirst. When things had almost reached their worst, the wind veered a little in our favour, and hoisting all sail and plying every oar, we made the best speed we could towards the west. At last we came within sight of a sandy shore, where the fleet remained while the men procured water to fill our casks, by digging pits in the sandy soil.

For fifty-three days we kept on in a westerly direction, with the land almost always in view. Now and then we stopped to find shelter from rough weather, to catch fish, and to procure further supplies of food and water. A good

deal of time, too, was spent in repairing the vessels. On the morning of the fifty-fourth day, Juan de Anasco declared, from the appearance of the country, that we were not above sixty leagues from the river of Panuco, where there was a Spanish settlement. Our delight at this intelligence was cut short by the sudden coming on of a terrible storm, which blew us out to sea, and threatened to terminate our adventures by our total destruction. Five of the vessels (mine included) managed, however, to reach the Panuco river and secure shelter from the fury of the gale, which lasted for six-and-twenty hours. Here, to our great joy, we found that the Indians who came down to us were wearing Spanish clothes, and could speak some Spanish. They told us that the Spanish settlement of Panuco was some leagues up the river, and offered to escort us there. No time was lost in acting upon this offer. We made our way to the town at the best of our speed, and, on arriving there, were received with open arms by the pitying inhabitants. But we first of all proceeded in a body to the church where we offered up our prayers and thanks to Almighty God for having brought us safely through so many dangers and hardships. Afterwards we were hospitably entertained by the inhabitants, and all our immediate wants supplied. In a few days we were joined by our comrades of the two missing ships. Like us, they had been blown out to sea, but had managed to escape the fury of the winds and waves by running their vessels on a sandy shore, some leagues below the Panuco river.

Here, then, we were all assembled, the forlorn remnant of the gallant and costly armament which, nearly five years before, had set out from Havañah with such high hopes and glorious prospects. Of the thousand gay and valiant cavaliers and footmen who composed the great expedition of De Soto, there remained less than three hundred blackened, haggard, shrivelled, and half-naked wanderers, clad in the ragged skins of deer, buffaloes, bears, and other animals, and looking more like wild savages than Christian men.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

How the Spaniards quarrelled among themselves, and had to be separated—Surprising value of the Florida pearls—Further discontent and violence of the disbanded soldiers of the army—Juan Terron and his pearls—I buy horses, and go to Mexico—Luis de Moscoso befriends me—Introduction to the Viceroy, Mendoza—He contemplates a new expedition to Florida—I become his secretary—The project abandoned—I am granted a fine estate, and settle on it—Retrospect—Old friends and comrades—The Stanleys and their fortune—My companions in arms—Thoughts of De Guzman and his plans—We may meet again.

I WISH not to lengthen unduly this account of my adventures by describing how the Spaniards quarrelled and fought amongst themselves, to the killing of some and the wounding of many, during their sojourn of five-and-twenty days at Panuco—how the spectacle of the peace and prosperity of that little town made them think how happy they might have been in the beautiful provinces they had abandoned in their greedy quest for gold—how the men accused the officers, and the officers blamed each other—how, at last, Mendoza, the Viceroy at Mexico, had to interpose his authority, and to send orders for them to be sent to that city in isolated bands, so that they might not slay each other on the way—how in Mexico they were clothed and fed by the people, who regarded them as heroes—how the Viceroy promised to organize a fresh expedition into Florida, and, in the meantime, enrolled and put upon pay all of them who chose to volunteer for it. Into those matters I enter not, for I have done with the story of the De Soto expedition, and now only desire to put down a few words more about myself and my good wife Aymay, and the affairs more immediately concerning us, so as to complete the history of our fortunes down to this present year 1558.

Aymay had endured without a murmur or complaint the terrors, fatigues, privations, and sufferings of the cruel voyage from Aminoya to Panuco. But the courage and fortitude which had sustained her during the voyage down the river and across the sea, gave way when we were safely housed at Panuco. She fell into a kind of low fever, from which her life was for some time in danger. Her recovery was slow, and necessitated our remaining in the town for over two months. We had been taken into the house of the Corregidor, where also De Moscoso and other of the officers had been entertained. We had remained long after the rest; and the time being now come to take our departure I was desirous of making some acknowledgment to the lady of the house for the kindness we had received. Not daring to offer her some of our gold, I begged her acceptance of a handful of the pearls we had with us. It was with much difficulty that I persuaded her to accept the present. She assured me that I had no idea of the real value of what I offered her, and that in Madrid (from whence she came) many of our pearls would sell for large sums. Her admiration was particularly aroused when we showed her the pearls contained in the little reed box given by the Princess Cofachique to Aymay, all of which were unpierced and of great size and beauty. The senora declared that their value was enormous. By her advice, and with her assistance, I disposed to advantage of some of my gold and pearls in Panuco, by sale and by way of exchange, in order to supply our immediate wants. I found afterwards, on my coming into Mexico, that the senora was no more than just in her estimate of the value of my treasures; and that in our pearls, and the turquoises and other stones we had brought away from Cargutah, we possessed a very large fortune.

It appeared that the poor soldiers of the disbanded army had also learnt in Mexico the value of the pearls which they might have had in abundance in Florida. They had not, unfortunately, brought many back with them, not knowing their real worth, and, therefore, not caring to encumber themselves with large quantities of them on the march. One foot-soldier named Juan Terron had actually thrown away about six pounds weight of large, unpierced pearls, rather than carry them further.

This was on the march in the hilly country, after the escape of the Princess Cofachique. Another soldier picked up thirty of the best of them, and afterwards sold them in Mexico for a thousand ducats. All the men who had carelessly carried away a few pearls in their pouches or pockets, now found to their surprise that they could sell them to dealers and wealthy people at great prices. They also found that some of the skins and furs they had with them (especially the marten skins) were highly esteemed, and met with ready purchasers at good prices. But instead of being comforted by such pleasant discoveries, they gave way to fresh anger, and cursed their ill fortune in not having better understood the value of things which they might have carried away in abundance. Thereupon they once more sought out their late officers to vent their rage upon them, and sanguinary broils broke out in the city, which were only appeased by the Viceroy with great difficulty, and by renewed promises of a fresh expedition.

Before setting out from Panuco I bought six excellent horses, the town being famous for its breed of those animals. Our party consisted of four persons—my wife, myself, the ever-faithful and attached Choquo, and the Spanish woman who had been Aymay's companion on the voyage, and who was now a widow, her husband having died on the river of sickness and wounds. For each of us there was a horse, the other two horses carrying the baggage of the whole party, for we had made many necessary purchases at Panuco.

Arrived in Mexico—than which no city in the world is more pleasantly situated—I lost no time in hiring a commodious house for my family. Nor did I lose time afterwards in calling upon Luis de Moscoso, from whom I had a most cordial and friendly reception. He assured me of his good will and desire to serve me, and promised that if I decided to remain in Mexico he would do many things for me greatly to my advancement. In none of those promises did he fail, but kept his word as a true comrade in arms and an honourable cavalier. In a little time he introduced me to the Viceroy, to whom he had already spoken about me in favourable terms. The Viceroy treated me with great courtesy and kindness; and then, as well as in other interviews I had with him, got from

me the fullest information I could give him about the provinces of Florida, the geography of the country, the natives, the soil, the climate, the produce, the minerals, and everything else of importance for him to know, in view of the new expedition he contemplated organizing. At his instance I told him what I thought of the prospects of such an undertaking, expressing an opinion strongly favourable to it, and pointing out that clearly the easiest way of reaching the heart of the country and the regions most favourable for colonization, was to sail up the Rio Grande. Further, in response to his solicitations, I heartily and readily agreed to join the expedition, and in the meantime help in organizing it. Thereupon he promised me a high command in it; and the better to secure me for the time being, made me secretary to the contemplated expedition, with power to enrol members, and do all things necessary for ripening the project to a practical point. But I soon made the discovery that the soldiers who made such loud lamentations over the miscarriage of the De Soto enterprise, and the opportunities they had missed of enriching themselves as colonists in Florida, were by no means so willing as they pretended to engage in the new undertaking and face the fresh hardships it would necessarily involve. The Viceroy seeing this, and cooling from his first enthusiasm in the matter, began to manifest a disinclination for the project, and by the time a year had elapsed the scheme was entirely abandoned, and my secretaryship came to an end. I felt this, under the circumstances, to be a relief, and I suffered nothing by it, but rather it became the gateway to better fortune. For Mendoza, feeling bound to make some provision for me, bestowed upon me a fine estate in land in the district of Cuernavaca, on the southern slopes of the mountains overlooking the lovely valley of Mexico. This estate had lapsed to the Government in consequence of the original owner, Gomez de Cardenos, having left it and gone to Peru, without having occupied it for eight years, as required by the law. It is a fair and flourishing place, with good pasturage on the higher lands for sheep; sugar and mulberry plantations in the lower lands; and, in the middle regions, planted with vines and growing corn, hemp and flax, and other produce. In addition there is a large stone house,

for which, however, I had to pay a compensation to the late owner. On the estate are settled a number of Indians, subject to the law of *repartimientos*, or vassalage; but of this law (which is of questionable legality) I have never availed myself, preferring to deal with the people as free men, and finding it not to my disadvantage to do so. The region contains many Indian ruins.

It is now fifteen years since I came into Mexico, and during that time my prosperity has experienced no reverse. My wife, now a passable Spanish senora, with little to suggest her Indian origin, of which, however, she is always proud, has borne me three sons and two daughters. To me she is as dear as ever, and in my eyes handsomer, albeit the grace and slimness of figure which I once admired have gone with her youth, and been replaced by more matronly proportions, better suited, on the whole, to her maturer years.

What remains to be said? Henry Stanley did not long remain in Mexico, but sailed for Spain. In the years that have since elapsed I have heard from him and my uncle's family at long intervals. At first I learnt with sorrow that the fortunes of his father's house had declined, owing to the spread of heresy in England, and the ruthless persecution of all who adhered to the true and ancient faith. Later information tells me that my uncle and his family have returned from their exile in Spanish Flanders, and re-established themselves in the old house at Hooton, by the Mersey, this being one of the happy though minor results of the accession of the good Queen Mary to the throne of England, and the repression of heresy there. Sir William, I learn, is held in high esteem at Court, and his son Henry has been entrusted with important missions of a confidential character between the Queen and the Spanish monarch. In all this I rejoice, though it is likely enough I may never again see my native land, or any of my uncle's family.

Of my old comrades of the expedition many returned to Spain broken in fortune and health; many went to retrieve their fortunes in Peru; some took holy orders; and a few remained in Mexico and for the most part prospered here. Luis de Moscoso was one of those who remained, marrying a lady of rank and wealth, who was a relation of

his. I have the honour to count him as a good friend, and indeed patron, for I owe him much. Like myself, he would willingly have engaged in another expedition to Florida, had the opportunity offered; and even yet we often talk together of the feasibility of establishing white colonies there, and of the desirability of opening up to civilization one of the finest countries on the globe. Whatever we may do or leave undone, there is no doubt a time will come when someone will accomplish the glorious work which De Soto began. The conquest and settlement of Florida, rightly undertaken, and slowly, mercifully, and patiently pursued, will be found an easy and profitable undertaking, and the source of innumerable blessings to the natives of that country.

Often and often do my thoughts go back to De Guzman, to Cargutah, to the worthy and capable Cherokees, and to my old and pleasant life in the little Indian state. Sometimes I think that De Guzman may succeed in his great plan of founding a powerful Indian kingdom, dominating all Florida, and capable of holding its own against foreign aggression. All my hopes and wishes are that he may so succeed, but reason and probability suggest otherwise. For his position is one of complete isolation, and the element of white civilization which he represents is too insignificant and localized to prevail in the long run against so much that is alien and antagonistic. A revolution which depends for its success upon the continued supremacy and the life of one man, deriving no help from without, has but a poor chance, and so I fear nothing very great or very lasting can come of the ambitious ideas of De Guzman. Even yet, perhaps, some day I and others may be able to lend him a helping hand, and give some assistance in doing for the natives of Florida that which the Spaniards (merciless and rapacious though they have been) have done for the natives of Mexico, namely—rescuing them from inhuman and bloody barbarism, improving their industrial and general social position, and conferring upon them the blessings of Christianity and civilization. But, for the present at any rate, this is the end of the history of my adventures in Florida.

THE END.

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